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Heroes of the Nations

EDITED BY

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THE HERO'S DEEDS AND HARD-WON FAME SHALL LIVE.

RICHELIEU

RICHELIEU

AND THE GROWTH OF FRENCH POWER

BY

JAMES BRECK PERKINS, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF "FRANCE UNDER MAZARIN," "FRANCE UNDER THE REGENCY," "FRANCE UNDER LOUIS XV."

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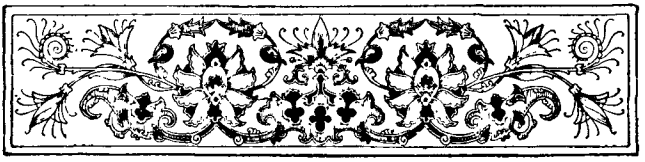

PREFACE

THE plan of the series to which this Life of Richelieu belongs does not allow any reference to authorities. The present work, however, is based upon an examination of original sources of information, and every effort has been made to secure accuracy, alike in the details of Richelieu's life and as to the nature and results of his administration.

The materials for a study of Richelieu's career are numerous and reasonably complete. His correspondence has been published, and is of the highest value. In addition to this, Richelieu's own *mémoires* are of great importance. They are, indeed, his own statements, and must often be corrected by references to his letters and other documents, but they furnish an account of his career which is for the most part accurate and complete.

I have also examined the MSS. which can be found in the *Affaires Étrangères* at Paris and in the other public offices. So careful, however, has been the study of everything bearing on Richelieu's career that not a great deal of importance now remains unpublished.

Contemporary memoirs are numerous. These vary largely in accuracy and importance, but all are of value as giving different phases of contemporary opinion, even when they are not altogether trustworthy in their statements of occurrences. The *mémoires* of Bassompierre, Pontis, Fontrailles, Turenne, Gaston, Molé, Montresor, Montglat; the *Correspondance de Sourdis, Epistolæ Grotii, Mercure François, Dispacci Veneziani*, and *Archives Curieuses* are some of the records that can be consulted with profit.

The literature in reference to Richelieu is also very voluminous. The great work of M. Hanotaux, when complete, will contain the most valuable account of Richelieu's life that has appeared. With such diligence and ability has M. Hanotaux studied his subject that his work will remain, I think, the permanent record of the career of the great Cardinal. This Life of Richelieu, when finished, will comprise four large volumes, and its size will perhaps deter the ordinary reader, but it is none too full for anyone who wishes to familiarise himself with French history during the important period covered by Richelieu's administration.

A work of much value in reference to the details of government is *Richelieu et la Monarchie Absolue*, by the Viscount G. d'Avenel. His familiarity with the conditions of the time, both social and political, is based upon an exhaustive study of original documents. One may perhaps disagree with some of the results he reaches, but his researches are a mine of information.

In my *History of France under Mazarin* I gave a review of Richelieu's administration. In writing this Life of Richelieu I have been obliged to repeat in substance some things which are found in that work.

JAMES BRECK PERKINS.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., March, 1900.

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RICHELIEU

CHAPTER I

FRANCE AS RICHELIEU FOUND IT

NO one would dispute Cardinal Richelieu's right to be regarded as a national hero. In his lifetime he had few friends and many enemies; his rule was harsh, it was not attended with general prosperity, and it was marked by merciless severity. Few loved him and few regretted his decease. The King who maintained him in office regarded him with ill-concealed dislike, the people who suffered under his rule felt for him an unconcealed hatred.

Yet the French people now esteem the Cardinal as one of the greatest of their great men; his fame is cherished because he secured for France glory and power, a paramount influence in European politics, the foremost place among European nations. That he was an extraordinary man was acknowledged in his own day; and now it is seen that his

work left its permanent impress on French government and French history, that it increased the power of the French monarchy and secured for it a position in Europe which it had not before held.

It is not strange, therefore, that the French people should hold in respectful if not in affectionate remembrance a man who helped to make France great. He was merciless to his enemies, but they are forgotten; he did not secure prosperity for the people, but the traditions of past distress do not disturb posterity. There was also in his character and career much that was striking and dramatic. His personality stands out in the pages of history, it has lent itself to romance and the drama; the figure of the Cardinal, clad in the red robes of the Church, inscrutable, implacable, inexorable, is familiar even to those who spend little time in studying the records of the past. In the long list of famous French statesmen, he is the best known.

Before attempting to relate Richelieu's career, it may be well to give a brief sketch of the condition of France and of the French government when an obscure bishop obtained a position in the royal council, and in a few years made himself the actual ruler of the kingdom.

When Armand de Richelieu was born, the kingdom of France was governed by Henry III., the last of the Valois kings. The country was still involved in the wars of religion, which raged during a good part of the sixteenth century. In 1585, the year of Richelieu's birth, Sixtus V. lent a helping

hand to the League by excommunicating Henry of Navarre, and declaring that son of perdition incapable of inheriting the French throne. Four years later, Henry III. was murdered, and Henry IV., the first of the Bourbon line, notwithstanding the papal fulminations, succeeded to the throne of France. He was successful in the field against those who disputed his title, and by adopting the religious profession of the majority of his subjects, he secured the peaceful submission of the entire country. In 1597, by the famous Edict of Nantes, he granted religious toleration to the minority, whose belief he had formerly professed, and the wars of religion were brought to an end.

The administration of Henry IV. was conducted with wisdom and was accompanied by prosperity; France was influential abroad and her people were prosperous at home. It was a period of rapid growth in wealth, attended by an increase in general well-being. Henry was sincere in saying that he wished every French peasant might have a fowl in his pot, and he did much to secure the fulfilment of his desire. But in 1610 the King fell a victim to an assassin's knife, and France was for some years ruled by his widow, an Italian princess of the famous House of the Medici.

The boundaries of France then contained about four-fifths of the territory which they now comprise, even after the disasters of 1870. In the south, Roussillon was still Spanish, Savoy and Nice were Italian, Alsace and Lorraine formed part of the German Empire; Franche-Comté, Artois, and

Flanders, at the east and north, recognised the authority of the King of Spain.

This territory was more sparsely peopled than it is to-day. The population of France was estimated at sixteen millions, and it did not exceed that number. Since then it has more than doubled, though when compared with other European nations of the seventeenth century, the country seemed very populous, and travellers were impressed by the number of its people. Yet great sections that are now fertile land were then the home of wild beasts, or tenanted by a few scattering and half-barbarous occupants; much of the forest by which Gaul was originally covered had been cleared away, but thousands and hundreds of thousands of acres were still timber land. Game of many kinds abounded, not only birds and small game, but deer, wolf, and bear. In the Forest of Ardennes, in the defiles of Auvergne, the hunter could find great sections of land as nature left them, in which wild beasts were more abundant than they now are in any part of the United States.

It was not only the primeval forest, but the primeval swamp that checked cultivation. Vast expanses of low, wet land were still undrained; rivers and streams overflowed, carrying destruction along their shores; the conquest of the soil by man was still far from complete.

The condition of the people varied greatly in different sections: while in some provinces a reasonable prosperity was found, in others extreme poverty was widespread. The peasant's home was usually a mere hut, built of mud and often without windows

or chimney. In it he and his half-naked children lived, often as joint tenants with the family chickens, and the family hog or cow if he was so fortunate as to possess one. The clothing of the people was rough, and their homes were filthy. Meat was rarely eaten, wheat bread was a luxury; black bread, chestnuts, and a few vegetables were the staples of life.

A higher degree of comfort was found in some districts, where decent houses and sufficient, though simple, fare were the lot of most, but the great body of the peasantry lived in such poverty as is now rarely found in civilised lands. Ignorance was almost universal among them; there were few who could read or write. Unless a man went to the wars, his days were spent within a radius of a few miles, with no knowledge of the outside world and no interest in it, occupied only with the sordid problem of getting enough bread to avoid starvation and enough money to pay the tax-gatherer. The only spiritual nourishment was furnished by the parish priest, usually a peasant by birth, and distinguished from his flock by little except the ability to read and write, by familiarity with his breviary, and by a smattering knowledge of Latin. Religious sentiment thus taught might be sincere, but it was not often enlightened.

The condition of those living in the towns differed considerably from that of the peasants, and was, on the whole, much better. In our great cities are now found the extremes of vice and misery, while actual need and hunger are infrequent among the tillers of

the soil. There was enough of misery and vice in French cities then, but the state of the citizen was better than that of the countryman. The undue burden of taxation was perhaps the worst feature in the peasant's lot, and in this respect the people of the towns fared better.

If the dwellers in towns escaped the tax-gatherer more easily than their descendants, they had, on the other hand, few of the advantages that render modern cities costly, but also make them healthful and attractive. The material condition of most French cities can well be illustrated by that of the capital. Paris had then a population of half a million; many places of secondary importance now possess more inhabitants, but, at that period, the multitude of persons gathered in this one place was regarded as almost appalling. By edict after edict, it was sought to check the steady growth of the metropolis, but it was no more possible to stop the growth of the city than the rising of the tide. "Our predecessors," said Louis XIII., in an edict of 1627, "seeing that the growth of our good city of Paris was in a high degree injurious, have forbidden building in the faubourgs, and we have repeated these commands." Then follow the statement that such orders were unheeded, and a new prohibition of any further building in the capital, except to replace old with new. Even the local authorities were disturbed, and declared that the growth of population would create many evils, and among other things would render it impossible to remove the filth, or to ferret out criminals.

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PARIS, EARLY IN 17TH CENTURY. LA CITÉ AND THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE SEINE, LOOKING SOUTHEAST UP THE RIVER.

FROM AN OLD MAP, BRITISH MUSEUM.

Yet Paris bore little likeness to the great capital of our time. It was still mediæval, and in many respects more resembled the cities of the Orient than a modern town. The streets crossed and diverged in hopeless confusion, as they had been laid out by chance or caprice. Sidewalks and curbings were unknown, sewers and improved roadways were rare; in filth, in lack of sanitary provisions, Paris was almost as bad as Aleppo or Constantinople, and its stenches were famous throughout Europe. "Many of the streets," wrote a traveller, "are the filthiest and the most malodorous that I have seen in any country."

Bad as was the sanitary condition of Paris, that of smaller places was little better. In one town, we find the officials ordering that the bodies of animals which had died of disease should not be left in the streets. "It would be better to throw them into the river," said the vigilant authorities. In this town, as in almost all cities, the river furnished the inhabitants with their drinking-water; it is not strange that the death-rate was higher than it is now.

The highways of Paris were in a condition that seems almost incredible in a great capital. Richelieu's carriage plunged in so deep a mudhole in the Faubourg St. Antoine, in the very heart of the city, that it was tipped over, and the Cardinal, admonished by this accident, after much difficulty raised money for the repair of the road. Money was not freely granted for such purposes. In 1637, the amount spent on the highways of Paris was about one-sixtieth of the sum now annually expended.

In this intricate maze of dark, narrow, and dirty streets thronged a dense population, among whom flourished a liberal proportion of thieves, murderers, and criminals of every class, undisturbed by any pretence of an effective police, and free to act in localities that at night were unlighted save by the lamps the wayfarer carried. No one was allowed to walk in the streets of Paris after nine o'clock without carrying a lantern, in order, said the edict, to prevent the infinite number of robberies committed on those who venture out at night. The cost of lighting Paris under Louis XIII. was nothing, but if the purses of the burghers were spared by the tax-gatherer, they were often taken by the thieves who frequented the city and carried on their trade with comparative impunity.

Only a small part of the population had any instruction from books, but life in a great city is in itself an education. The Parisians were far removed from the brutish stupidity of the peasants, or the dull self-satisfaction of the inhabitants of provincial towns. Even in those days a French ruler could not disregard the wishes or the caprices of the capital.

If the Parisians were not all moral, they were very religious. Paris is now the headquarters of those who would fain do away with all trace of religious belief, but in the days of Richelieu it was Catholic to the core; the League there found its steadiest supporters; Henry IV. attended mass that he might possess in peace his good city of Paris. If some Protestant traveller forgot to kneel as the Holy Sacrament passed through the streets, he was

fortunate to escape with his life. A century later Paris had become liberal, and in another century it had become sceptical, but, under Richelieu, its people were still animated by an intense religious belief; they abhorred heresy and disliked toleration.

The number of clergy at Paris, priests, monks, and friars, was very great, and the city was girdled about by vast tracts of land owned by the various religious orders, whose names are still preserved in the faubourgs of the modern town. The streets swarmed with persons arrayed in religious dress, white, black, grey, and brown; their number was so great as to excite the attention of all travellers. Where the clergy were so numerous, religious buildings multiplied; convents for the monks and churches for the laity abounded in every quarter, and their bells and chimes resounded at all hours, creating, as has been said, an almost unbroken roar of pious thunder.

The difference between the inhabitants of the capital and the provinces has been an important factor in French history, but at this epoch the distinctions between the denizens of different parts of France were far greater than they are now. It was not strange that the inhabitants of remote provinces should differ in speech, dress, and modes of life, for communication between them was attended by difficulty and danger. Henry IV. recognised the importance of good roads in national development, and gave to their improvement more attention than any one of his predecessors. Yet it was but a beginning, and the work was checked at his death. On

many so-called highways, travel by waggon was impossible; in many seasons of the year, it was almost impracticable even for the pedestrian or the horseman. Innumerable are the accounts of the perils of travellers. In approaching the important city of Lyons by the main highway, a German traveller tells us, he found the road so washed by rain that his horse fell into a marsh, and the party advanced on foot in great peril of drowning. Such adventures were constantly encountered, and to the difficulty and danger of travel in bad weather were added perils from highwaymen. Even in the cities the police was imperfect, and a prudent man traversed the street at night with great apprehension for his purse, and some apprehension for his life. In the country, ruffians and thieves practised their arts with still less fear of the constabulary. Travellers went in parties and armed, well pleased if they reached their journey's end without having to exchange shots with highwaymen.

There was comparatively little travel. A peasant would pass his life, hardly going beyond the confines of his native parish. Many, whose means were larger, wandered no farther from home. A few nobles perfected their education by travel in other lands, but the prosperous bourgeois saw no reason why he should waste his money and lessen his comfort by leaving his home. To the average Parisian shopkeeper, an excursion to St. Cloud was not a light affair, a trip to Fontainebleau was a grave and serious undertaking.

When the intercourse between remote sections

was slight, and newspapers were practically unknown, the life of any locality was isolated, and the political effect of this was considerable. The influence of Paris was less than it has since become, because it was not so closely connected with the rest of France: there were, so to speak, no channels by which impulses from the capital could reach the provinces; the country was like an animal of low organisation,—no nervous centre was closely connected with other parts of the system.

Over all the land, numerous châteaux were scattered. "In France there are too many châteaux," said an ancient proverb, showing the deep-seated dislike to a powerful nobility that was still fresh at the era of the French Revolution. For the most part, these residences belonged to a feudal epoch, and were built for the purpose of defence; there was generally little regard for comfort, for luxury, for conveniences, which are now thought indispensable. The walls were heavy and could defy any weapons of offence until cannon came into use; moat and bridge, turret and portcullis, marked the fortress, and within were provisions for the numerous men-at-arms that the lord might require to defend his home against his enemy. To the ancient portholes, intended for archers, were added new openings where culverins and musketry could be used; the arms had changed, but the warlike purpose of the fortress was unaltered.

With the growth of monarchical authority internal disorder lessened, there was less need of fortifications, and the influence exercised by Italian art

and taste began also to show itself in the homes of the nobility. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, some of the mediæval ruggedness was done away with, gardens were embellished, pavilions erected, the château took on more the air of a residence and had less the appearance of a fortress. This was especially true of Paris. Until a recent period, comparatively few of the nobility had residences in the capital: their lives were spent in their own provinces; their interests, their ambitions, and their strifes were local. A few of the great nobles had headquarters at Paris, usually half-military in their character, and fitted to be places of refuge in times of disturbance. As the power of the King increased and his favour furnished a more tempting field for ambition, many of the nobility were found in attendance on the sovereign; the decline of the feudal system can be measured by the increased attendance of nobles at Court. When tranquillity was assured under Henry IV., its effects were soon seen in the architecture of Paris. New and magnificent residences, intended for peace and not for war, decorated and adorned with a splendour of which there had been little trace in the past, were erected by wealthy nobles.

A great number of fortified castles were destroyed by Richelieu's order. The measure was judicious, although its importance has been somewhat overestimated. These feudal fortresses had been impregnable against bands of unruly peasants, they had been formidable against men-at-arms provided with crossbows and battle-axes; but an army supplied

THE OLD LOUVRE.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

with cannon could, in a few hours, batter down the walls of a castle that might once have withstood a lengthy siege. They were the relics of a past age rather than important features of the present age. Richelieu might have allowed them to stand until they fell from decay or were torn down to suit new demands of fashion, without fearing any effective resistance to the royal authority. Still, the destruction of fortresses scattered through the interior of the country marked the close of an era of internal disorder and private warfare. It was an outward sign that the robber-baron and the noble highwayman had ceased to exist.

It was with political institutions rather than social conditions that Richelieu had to do when he became minister. Important as was his influence on the development of the French monarchy, he was no innovator,—he followed political traditions which had already taken deep root. The tendency of French growth had long been to strengthen monarchical power, and the great nobles, who once regarded the heirs of Hugh Capet as only first among equals, at last yielded obedience to the King of France. The independent power of the nobility waned with the decline of the feudal system, but the authority of the monarch varied with the ruler and the condition of the realm: there was order under a strong king, and insubordination under a weak king. In the disastrous era of the English wars, any central authority was at times unknown; in the sixteenth century, the wars of religion divided France on new lines, and it required the ability and good judgment

of Henry IV. to render the influence of the King again paramount.

The overthrow of the feudal aristocracy was an unmixed good, for the unruly power of turbulent nobles exerted no valuable restraint on the monarchy. It was rarely used except for private ends, nobles fought for their own privileges and their own advancement, and none of them sought to become popular leaders or to obtain for the people any larger measure of self-government.

But there were other checks on the central power which might have become institutions of value if they had been judiciously developed. Though no legislative body resembled in its constitution the English Parliament, the States-General, chosen to represent the three orders of the community, had at times been an important factor in political life; their sessions had been comparatively frequent in the sixteenth century, and it was as a member of that body that Richelieu first came into public notice.

So, also, in many of the provinces, the States still possessed a considerable degree of authority, not only in questions of local interest, but in their relations with the central Government. Many cities enjoyed special privileges; the courts, and especially the Parliament of Paris, endeavoured to use the right of registration, which was required for the validity of royal edicts, as an excuse for advising, and as a means of checking, the King. While there existed no regular and recognised check upon the royal authority, yet it was by no means possible for

the King to direct the State according to his own pleasure; he met on every side privileges granted by his predecessors which could not be lightly swept away, local institutions whose preservation had been guarded by the acts which united the provinces, where they existed, with the French kingdom, and a vast body of usages and customary law which regulated the rights and liabilities of the inhabitants of different parts of the country.

The provinces which formed the French monarchy were irregularly bound together, and the administrative system was not far removed from the mediæval confusion of the feudal ages. Prompt action by the Government was often impossible, the national resources could not be rendered efficient, and, as a result, the influence of France in European politics was not proportionate to her wealth or her population. The kingdom had played a varying rôle in foreign politics: at times French kings had taken an active part in the affairs of the continent, and again France had been of hardly more importance than Poland. In the sixteenth century, the wars of religion so distracted the land that the influence of the country outside of its own boundaries was small indeed. Henry IV. restored order; he was an able and ambitious sovereign, and desired that France should be a leader in the questions that were agitating Europe. Abandoning Italy, where French blood and treasure had often been wasted, Henry sought to exert an active influence in Germany, and he endeavoured in every way to check the dangerous power of Spain.

After his death, there came a complete change in policy. Mary de' Medici wished to unite the fortunes of France with those of Spain: she married her son to a Spanish princess and her daughter to a Spanish prince, her desire would have been to espouse the cause of Catholicism in the contest that was soon to begin in Germany, and to follow the leadership of Spain, the most Catholic and also the most retrograde of the great Powers of Europe.

While the power of the nobility had waned, a body of great landowners had not yet become a body of courtiers, and in a weak government, such as that of Mary de' Medici, the country was distracted by the ambition and lawlessness of unruly nobles.

Mary de' Medici was regent, and upon her son, Louis XIII., soon devolved the control of the State, but he was an unpromising boy who certainly would never become a great and vigorous king. Unruly elements need fear no severe repression from him, nor was he a man who could weld together the imperfectly connected elements of French administration. It seemed that the Government would be so occupied by troubles at home, that it would be in no condition to attempt any important action abroad. Whether the monarchy would become stronger or weaker after the death of Henry IV., and what part it would take in European politics, were questions that might well have embarrassed a student. But at this time appeared a man of genius and extraordinary force of character, who, for almost twenty years, shaped the destinies of France.

CHAPTER II

RICHELIEU'S EARLY CAREER

1585–1617

CARDINAL RICHELIEU was of ancient though not illustrious lineage. His family belonged to the lesser nobility of Poitou; they originally bore the name of du Plessis, and traced their ancestry as far back as the thirteenth century. One Guillaume du Plessis, in the reign of Philip Augustus, is the first of whom we find any record, and even at that period the family held several small estates. As far as any tradition remains, they seem to have been a fighting race, and prone to deeds of cruelty and violence. Such, however, were the customs of the times, and the du Plessis were probably neither better nor worse than most of the petty nobles in an age of disorder.

In the fifteenth century, one of a younger branch married Perrine Clérembault; the child of this union inherited from his mother's family the estate of Richelieu, on which a strong castle had long stood, and took the name of du Plessis de Richelieu.

While the older branches of the du Plessis family sank into provincial obscurity, the Richelieus made their way to a certain prominence. They were good fighters, a hardy and enterprising race, with bold hearts and heavy hands.

In the civil wars of the sixteenth century, we find them taking an active part; they were fierce partisans of the League, and extended no mercy to Huguenots. Antoine du Plessis, called the monk, a great-uncle of the Cardinal, left his name in the annals of the time as a man noted for cruelty, even in a merciless age. The family wished to make a priest of him that he might hold certain benefices. But he fled from the abbey, discarded his gown, and became a soldier. Perhaps as a result of his religious training, he was especially rigorous against heretics; on one occasion, a hundred Huguenots having taken refuge in a church, he butchered them all in cold blood, and he carried fire and pillage wherever he went. At last he was killed in a brawl in Paris,—"a man," says an historian of the time, "of evil fame and renowned for robberies, plundering, and blasphemy, and moreover a great ruffian . . . who thus met a death appropriate to his life."

The monk's kinsfolk were men of better reputation, but they were well fitted for the stormy period of the civil wars. These rough warriors, while they did not add largely to their possessions, made considerable progress in the world; they obtained a certain position at the Court, and could hope for some marks of royal favour. In 1542, the grandfather of the future Cardinal married Françoise de Roche-

chouart, a member of a powerful and illustrious family. In some degree she derogated from her family rank by marrying a Richelieu, and the marriage contract displays the difference in position with the somewhat brutal frankness of an age of plain speaking. The father of the bride is described as the "high and mighty Seigneur, Antoine de Rochechouart, Baron of Faldonars, Seigneur of Saint Amand, Seneschal of Toulouse," while the groom is briefly disposed of as "Louis du Plessis, Knight, Seigneur of Richelieu and other possessions."

If the bride had high rank, she had also a bad temper, and apparently she found consolation for a misalliance by making life uncomfortable for her new connexions. She was a woman of a harsh and domineering character, but, however disagreeable to live with, she transmitted to her descendants a vigour, in which, indeed, few of the Richelieus were ever wanting. Her son François signalised his entry into active life by murdering a gentleman, who had himself killed François's older brother as a result of some quarrel over precedence at a church. Murdering a man against whom one had a grievance was not an offence to be strictly inquired into, and ere long we find François a retainer of Henry III., and a favourite of that sovereign. After the King's murder, Richelieu had sufficient sagacity to abandon the lost cause of the League and espouse the fortunes of Henry of Navarre, and he fought under his banner at Arques and Ivry. True to the family traditions, he was a bold and ready fighter, active,

pushing, and not over-scrupulous; he enjoyed the favour of two sovereigns, was made captain of the guards, and at last obtained the office of grand provost. He was, we are told, a good Catholic, but scantily educated, resembling in both respects most gentlemen of the period. When eighteen years old, François married Susanne de la Porte, a girl of fifteen, belonging to a reputable parliamentary family. If the pedigree of the Cardinal's mother was less illustrious than that of his grandmother, her character was much more amiable; she was a quiet, judicious woman, who brought up her children wisely and well. Five children were born to her, three sons and two daughters. On September 9, 1585, the third and last son was born in Paris, where his parents were temporarily residing, and in May, 1586, at the church of St. Eustache, the future Cardinal was baptised by the name of Armand Jehan, son of François du Plessis, Seigneur of Richelieu, and of Dame Susanne de la Porte, his wife. Five years later, in 1590, when he was only forty-two, the father's career of brawls and warfare came to an end; he died of a sudden fever, much regretted, as we are told, by his associates and his sovereign. He left a widow and five children, and an estate quite insufficient for their needs.

The provost was heavily in debt when he died; it was even necessary, so it was said, to put in pledge his collar of the Order of the Holy Ghost to pay the expenses of his funeral. The widow administered the family estate more prudently than her husband had done; possessing good judgment, and practising

FRANÇOIS DU PLESSIS, SEIGNEUR DE RICHELIEU, THE FATHER OF THE CARDINAL.

FROM THE DRAWING IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY, PARIS.

Reproduced from Hanotaux's "Histoire du Cardinal de Richelieu."

a rigorous economy, she succeeded in saving the possessions of the family, which, indeed, were of no great value, even when the mortgages on them were paid. Like many needy nobles, the Richelieus obtained assistance from the royal purse. In 1593, twenty thousand livres were paid to Susanne de la Porte; in the next year she received fifteen thousand more as compensation for some abbey; and when the oldest son was of age to attend Court, he at once received a pension of three thousand livres.

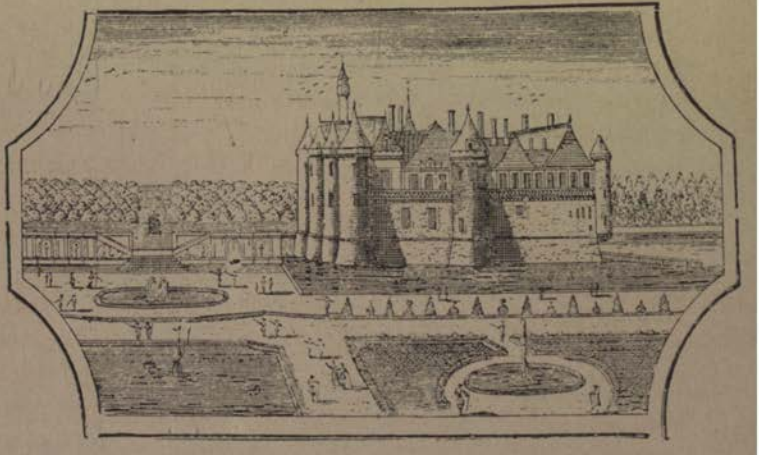
The family residence was the château of Richelieu, and there Armand spent the earlier years of his life. When he became rich and famous, he rebuilt the ancient home of his race. There were other and more commanding sites which he might have chosen, but, whether from a desire to magnify the importance of his ancestry, or from attachment to his early home, he preferred the spot where the castle of the Richelieus had long stood. Against the wish of the architect, as it was said, he insisted on preserving some portions of the ancient structure—the chapel, the great hall, the chamber occupied by his mother. Little of the château built by the Cardinal now remains, but the extensive park which was admired for its beauty in his day, the trim avenues, the canals, and jets of water are still there, not greatly changed in appearance since Richelieu wandered about them in his boyhood.

His pride — it may be called his vanity — was shown in many things connected with the family seat. Not far distant was the château of Champigny, belonging to the great family of Montpensier,

which much exceeded in splendour the early home of the Richelieus, and at this, as a boy, he may have gazed with envious admiration. When he had become prime minister, he induced, or rather compelled, Gaston to sell Champigny to him, and he then pulled down the château and used the stone in the construction of the new and splendid home for his own family, which now had no neighbour to rival it.

The château of Richelieu, as it stood in his youth, was a good specimen of a feudal building, constructed during the Hundred Years' War in a period of almost perpetual disturbance. Eight towers protected it, and it was surrounded by a deep and broad fosse. Within were the great halls, the numerous courts, galleries, and chambers of a castle, intended not merely for the residence of a family, but for the presence of a body of soldiers in time of need. It was surmounted by the confusion of roofs, turrets, and chimneys which gives a picturesque charm to the few specimens of the early French Renaissance that still survive. It was an agreeable home, and was also well fitted to stand any ordinary siege at a time when heavy artillery was unknown.

The country about was flat and fertile, and the view from the château was extensive, though not striking. It stood on a small island, surrounded by the waters of the Mable, not far from the little village of Braye. There the Richelieus dwelt with a certain degree of feudal importance, but, like many another family of country gentlemen, with more state than ready money. Their turbulent activity



THE CHÂTEAU OF RICHELIEU BEFORE ITS REBUILDING BY THE CARDINAL.

FROM AN OLD PRINT IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY, PARIS.

Reproduced from Hanotaux's "Histoire du Cardinal de Richelieu."

had not gained them wealth, and the mother of the Cardinal was often disturbed by lack of means.

The condition of the surrounding country during Richelieu's youth might well have impressed the mind of the future statesman with the necessity for a stronger Government. Long years of civil war had devastated the province. After Henry III.'s death, Poitou espoused the cause of the League. Not until Henry IV. had been for some years on the throne was he able to restore order throughout France, and, in the meantime, Poitou, when not the seat of active warfare, was infested by bands of unruly marauders; trade was at a standstill; the peasant saw his field pillaged and his crop destroyed; the roads were so unsafe that few ventured to travel.

Richelieu passed the first years of his life in a community that was in constant apprehension of arson and pillage, in a land where famine and pestilence were frequent visitors, and where these conditions existed because the law was not strong enough to repress the violent and protect the orderly. These early impressions were as deeply implanted in his mind as the lessons he conned with his tutor, and formed quite as important a part of his education.

Notwithstanding the troubled condition of the country, the children were not allowed to neglect the studies regarded as proper for those of their class. Armand began his education at the château under the charge of a prior named Guillot, known for his charities and piety. He did not continue long under the instruction of the amiable prior; at

the age of nine he was sent to Paris and entered the College of Navarre, which his father and uncles had attended. There he pursued the educational course of the period, from which could be gleaned a surprisingly small amount of useful information. The chief drill was in Latin; the scholars were required to use this language in their conversation, and the Latin authorities were diligently studied. Richelieu pursued also the course technically known as philosophy, in which were embraced logic and such science as could be found in the books of Aristotle.

The schooling of the time was narrow and severe, and learning was imparted with the aid of vigorous discipline. The rector, Jean Yon, was an amiable and venerable man, but he did not spare the rod. In his days of power and glory, the Cardinal was sometimes visited by his former preceptor, and he tells us that he always saw him enter with a certain sensation of fear.

When Armand had finished with grammar and philosophy, he began studies that were regarded as much more important for a gentleman whose life was to be passed at the Court and on the battle-field. There was no thought of making a priest of the young Richelieu, and he had no taste for a religious vocation. His natural inclination was for the career of a soldier, in which so many of his ancestors had spent their lives, and having acquired the moderate amount of learning, for the most part quite useless, which was proper for one of his rank, he now entered the academy of Antoine du Pluvinel. There were taught the accomplishments required in

a gentleman and a soldier. The pupils were drilled in riding, fencing, the use of arms, and in the games of the period. The academy was, moreover, a finishing school for manners, and Pluvinel endeavoured to impart to his scholars the latest fashions of the Court, the graceful bearing and ready wit that befitted an accomplished cavalier.

While the Marquis of Chillou, as Richelieu was then called, was fitting himself to be a soldier and a courtier, his career was suddenly changed by considerations of family interest. Notwithstanding his infirm health, Richelieu had qualities that would have made him a good soldier, and by nature he hankered for fighting rather than praying. Yet it is probable that the exchange of arms for the Church afforded a better field for his subtle and astute genius.

The circumstances that made a priest of Richelieu were of a nature not uncommon at that period. In default of ready money, the monarch often rewarded faithful servants by the patronage of some ecclesiastical preferment, and Henry III., in return for the services of Richelieu's father, had given the family the right to fill the bishopric of Luçon. Such grants were usually unprofitable to the spiritual interests of the faithful. The Richelieus administered their bishopric as did the holders of most livings fallen into secular hands: they confined their attention to laying hold of the ecclesiastical emoluments and did not concern themselves with the needs of the diocese. A succession of nominal bishops collected the revenues for the benefit of the family, and the Episcopal see in reality remained vacant.

There were many gross abuses in the ecclesiastical establishment, but a scandal like this, however convenient for the dilapidated fortunes of the Richelieus, could not continue indefinitely. The chapter were perhaps willing to do without a bishop, but they would not allow the revenues of the diocese to be absorbed while the religious buildings went to ruin from lack of repairs. Accordingly, the canons began a suit against Madame de Richelieu, asking that she be compelled to apply some part of the moneys she received to the needs of the church. This action brought matters to a crisis; however favourable the authorities or the courts might be to her interests, they could not publicly declare that the cathedral of Luçon must be left to decay, in order that Madame de Richelieu might use the bishop's salary to educate her children and pay her domestics.

The mother decided that if the Episcopal salary could no longer be applied to the needs of the entire family, the Episcopal see might furnish an establishment for one of the sons. Accordingly, the second son was chosen for the office, and though only twelve years of age, Alphonse de Richelieu was recognised as titular Bishop of Luçon. But the son was unwilling to carry out his mother's prudent arrangement; as Alphonse approached his majority, he declared himself unfit for the duties of the office and refused to accept it. His ancestors and kinsfolk were eager for temporal advantages and were little disturbed by scruples, but Alphonse was a being of a different sort; he said that he was not fit to be a bishop, and, therefore, he would not be one. He

DUCHY OF RICHELIEU.

FROM HANOTAUX'S "HISTOIRE DU CARDINAL DE RICHELIEU."

refused the mitre and chose to become a monk. He became an inmate of the convent of the Grande Chartreuse, and there passed his days in pious obscurity until he was called from his retreat by the younger brother, who had become the ruler of France.

When Alphonse failed her, the mother turned to her third son, and he was not the person to prefer a convent to a bishopric. Armand had no special desire for a religious career; he had been bred for the army, and that was the calling most to his taste, but the present opportunity was not one to be neglected by a young man who combined ambition with sound judgment. The see of Luçon was not richly endowed or important among French bishoprics, but it was not everyone who could secure a mitre at twenty-one, even if it were not of the greatest weight. Certainly it was better to be a bishop than a lieutenant of dragoons; the position gave rank and precedence, it furnished an opportunity for acquiring prominence and power. Richelieu's health was infirm from childhood, and he seemed better fitted physically for the career of a priest than of a soldier. It was accordingly decided that the third son should be the bishop of the family.

Having chosen his calling, Richelieu was not the man to dawdle in his preparations for it; he quitted the academy and exchanged fencing and fashion for the more serious studies of theology. In his new profession he made good progress, and soon familiarised himself with the theology and metaphysics taught in the schools of the Sorbonne.

Nor was he long delayed in receiving the reward of his labours; in 1606, when twenty-one years of age, Armand de Richelieu was nominated by Henry IV. Bishop of Luçon. He lacked nearly five years of the canonical age, and the French ambassador at Rome was instructed to ask for the papal dispensation. As this was slow in coming, Richelieu resolved to take the matter in his own hands. Accordingly, he started for Rome, there to prosecute his appeal in person. He was successful in obtaining the favour of Paul V., and the dispensation was granted with no more delay than was ordinarily required by the usages of the Roman curia. In April, 1607, the young aspirant was duly consecrated as Bishop of Luçon; he was not quite twenty-three.

In after years, Richelieu's enemies accused him of securing his promotion by exhibiting to the Pope a false certificate of baptism, and asserted that when Paul was informed of the fraud he declared that the new bishop would surely prove a great rogue. This slander does not seem to be supported either by the evidence or the probabilities. The object of Richelieu's visit to Rome was to obtain a dispensation that would allow him to become a bishop notwithstanding his insufficient age; his lack of the required years was the only excuse for his going there instead of waiting quietly in France for his bull. It was most unlikely that a candidate asking a dispensation would present a certificate showing that no dispensation was needed. Nor was there any necessity for resorting to fraud, when dispensations for

insufficient age were liberally granted. Many scions of great families were unwilling to wait until twenty-five before assuming the mitre, and the canonical rule was rarely allowed to stand in the way of their early promotion. Richelieu did not belong to a great family, but he had influential friends to plead for him, and a fluent tongue to plead for himself; it would have been surprising if the dispensation had been refused, so there was no necessity for forged documents.

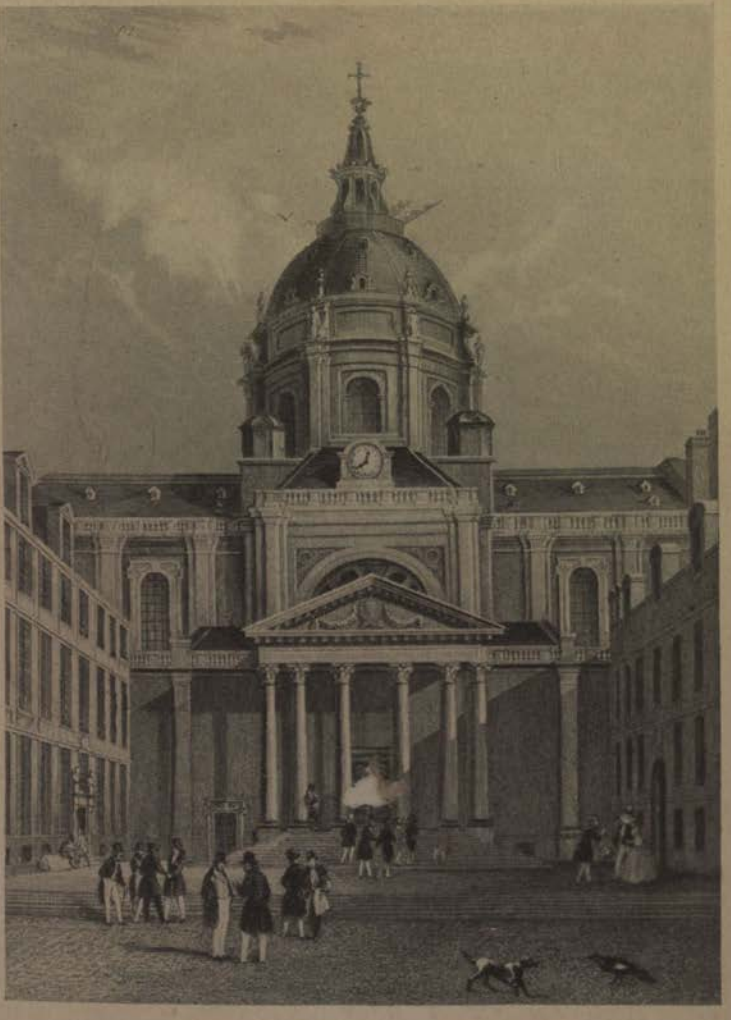
The new dignitary returned to Paris and to his studies at the Sorbonne. It was not often that a bishop sat on the students' benches, and his way was sure to be made easy. He soon delivered the prescribed thesis, received the required degree, and was officially declared to be ready for his ecclesiastical work.

The traditions of the Church required a bishop to live among his flock, but this rule was often disregarded. Many bishops spent little time in their dioceses, and many spent none at all. Paris furnished more interest for the worldly and more opportunity for the ambitious; the ecclesiastic who could join in prayers with the King, and in praises of him, was more apt to become a minister or a cardinal than his Episcopal brother who spent his days exhorting the faithful or wrangling with his canons, in some remote district of France.

It might, therefore, have been expected that Richelieu would prefer to push his fortunes at Court, rather than retire to a small and obscure bishopric. Such was not his decision; after a short

stay at Paris, he set out for his new see, and devoted his attention to the interests of his flock with praiseworthy assiduity. He was not a man to sacrifice his temporal ambitions to the performance of ecclesiastical duties, but he decided wisely, if only his own advancement were to be considered. He was still a very young man, little known, and with a small income. His office gave him indeed a certain rank at Court, yet he was an unimportant personage among great officials, wealthy nobles, and favoured courtiers. In his diocese, on the other hand, he could exercise authority, and this was always dear to his heart; the faithful performance of his work might advance his fortunes more rapidly than dancing attendance on the Queen or her ministers; he was young and could bide his time. At all events he braved a winter's journey, which in those days of bad roads was always a disagreeable and sometimes a dangerous undertaking, and on December 21, 1608, he celebrated pontifical mass in the cathedral that had long stood in dilapidated disuse. It was sixty years since the faithful at Luçon had been favoured with a bishop residing among them.

Richelieu's flock had suffered from spiritual want, and they were not much better off in their temporal condition. Luçon was situated in lower Poitou, and was a town of two or three thousand people, the seat of a very small diocese, surrounded by great marshes, in a district both unhealthy and unproductive. The peasants who lived among the marshes of lower Poitou, so a traveller declares, were the poorest in France. Naturally, the bishop of an



THE SORBONNE (INTERIOR OF THE COURT).

FROM A STEEL ENGRAVING.

impoverished flock, where the ecclesiastical buildings and revenues had been neglected for half a century, could not expect a large income or luxurious surroundings. His parishioners were burdened by taxation, his cathedral was dilapidated, and his revenues were small. Even his ecclesiastical wardrobe was scanty, and he lamented the condition of his tunics and dalmatics. All this was distasteful to a man who loved splendid surroundings, who thirsted not only for power, but for its trappings and external pomp. The new incumbent was little pleased. His was, he wrote, the poorest, the dirtiest, and the most disagreeable bishopric in France. There was no garden to his house, no horse for his carriage; he borrowed horses from friends and sighed bitterly for a set of plate. "If I could have some silver plates," he wrote a lady, "my position would gain a little dignity." He was long engaged in negotiations for a service of plate, but the five hundred crowns required for its purchase caused a delay of some years.

He encountered other embarrassments as he assumed his bishopric. The litigation by which the canons sought to compel Madame de Richelieu to restore the dilapidated cathedral was still pending, and good judgment was needed in that thorny affair. These trials met a young man who was actuated by no love for the quiet performance of religious work, and who regarded his bishopric as only a stepping-stone for his ambition. But if the duties were little to his taste, he performed them with reasonable fidelity. The litigation was settled and the cathedral repaired. The bishop sought to better the

condition of his flock by obtaining for them some reduction in taxation. In his treatment of the clergy under his charge, he was sometimes imperious, but he was usually judicious. With Richelieu in a petty bishopric, as with Napoleon on an unimportant island, his restless activity manifested itself, however restricted the sphere for its exercise. Richelieu not only laboured for the temporal interests of his flock, but he preached to them with zeal. Judging from the few samples we have of his sermons, they were marked by the bad literary taste of the period: they were crammed with citations, burdened with pedantry, and filled with mythological metaphors. Later, his enemies declared that his preaching was poor and ineffective, while flatterers insisted that he won great repute as a sacred orator. That he made himself somewhat known as a preacher was shown by the prominence accorded to him a little later among the clergy at the States-General.

During his residence at Luçon, Richelieu found time for a considerable amount of theological writing. All his life he thirsted for literary distinction, but the qualities which made him a great statesman did not make him a great writer. At times, his style was clear and vigorous, but it was frequently injured by over-elaboration, by struggling for effect, by artificial modes of expression that weary the reader. No more in literature than in the routine of ordinary life had Richelieu any taste for simplicity, and metaphors and tropes were as dear to him as sets of silver plate.

His writings were not inconsiderable in bulk. Some of them were published later in life, but they were largely prepared during the peaceful years spent at Luçon. A volume of *Ordinances* which early appeared throws light on abuses that were sufficiently common to require Episcopal condemnation. Penalties by fine were imposed upon any of the clergy who kept concubines in their houses, who got drunk, or indulged in public debauchery. "We have noticed with regret," says the pastoral, "that many priests go in bodies to the fairs and markets of the large towns, there indulging in unseemly festivities," and this also was forbidden.

These prohibitions do not imply that the moral condition of the clergy was, on the whole, low, but many of them were in manners and education little removed from the peasantry to whom they ministered; the civil wars of the sixteenth century had bred disorder among the clergy as well as among the laity, and instances of unedifying conduct were not uncommon. During Richelieu's life, there was a marked improvement in the entire Gallican Church, both in the higher and the lower clergy, and to this end he always laboured faithfully, whether as an unimportant bishop, or as a cardinal at the head of the State.

Other admonitions show that the future statesman was not free from beliefs which found acceptance at that period. He was much disturbed by the possibility of evil worked by necromancers. In one passage he refers to superstitions, some of which still find believers among the credulous and the vulgar.

"When a certain thing has a certain effect," he writes, "and we recognise that it does not possess that quality by its nature, and that God has not promised to give it the power supernaturally, such a thing should be condemned as diabolical; for example, seeing the moon over the left shoulder, considering certain days as fortunate or unfortunate, putting confidence in a certain number of lighted candles," etc.

His book called *The Instruction of a Christian* appeared in 1619; it was largely read and enjoyed the distinction of translation into several languages; though not an extraordinary work, it contained much common sense and sound religion briefly and tersely put. Among other directions, were some which illustrate again the bishop's belief in magic arts, for he expressly condemned those who by means of magicians and sorcerers invoked demons, and used these means to discover secrets, or to accomplish still more evil ends.

Richelieu published also various works of controversy against the Huguenots, one of which was entitled *A Method to Convert those who have Separated themselves from the Church.* But in these controversial writings he did not rise above the average of similar treatises, and the average is not high; the "Method" was not efficacious, and the dragoons of Louis XIV. brought more Huguenots into the fold than the arguments of Richelieu.

Thus engaged in his church work and in theological writing, during six years Richelieu spent his time almost entirely at Luçon, but his attention to the affairs of a petty bishopric did not interfere

with his watchful search for any chance of action on a larger field. His ambition was for political distinction, for the career of a statesman; he desired prominence and power. He had many influential friends with whom he corresponded, and whose favour he sought to cultivate. He was eager for promotion and not over-scrupulous in the pursuit, and he would have smiled at the modern apothegm that the office should seek the man. He believed that the man should seek the office with all his might; he knew that he was fitted to do great things, and he neglected no means by which he could obtain the opportunity. The letters of the Bishop of Luçon, when he was a humble cultivator of the great, do not resemble those of the imperious Cardinal at the height of his power, and there is often a strain of obsequious fawning that is not agreeable. It did not disturb Richelieu: he was not the man to disdain an advantage because the means of obtaining it might offend a feeling of personal dignity; if it were expedient to fawn on a stupid cardinal, to defend an unscrupulous adventurer, or to flatter an ignorant queen, Richelieu did it with zeal and without compunction.

In the political changes that followed the death of Henry IV., Richelieu hoped to find some opening for himself. Henry had regarded the young bishop with friendly eyes, but he was surrounded by ministers who had obtained his confidence by long and faithful service. The chief place in the royal favour was held by Sully, and that sagacious

statesman would not have favoured the promotion of an aspiring young politician like Richelieu.

But in May, 1610, Henry was murdered and the aspect of French politics changed. Louis XIII. was a child of eight, his mother, Mary de' Medici, was declared regent, and thus the posterity of the fortunate Florentine merchants again became rulers of France. Mary bore little resemblance to her famous predecessor; she possessed neither Catherine's ability, nor her energy, nor her cruelty. The widow of Henry IV. was a commonplace woman, narrow in her intelligence and bigoted in her religion, controlled by vulgar favourites, fond of luxury, averse to toil, who desired tranquillity and peace. She was singularly unfortunate in obtaining what she wished; her regency was a period of constant disorder; her power was overthrown by the murder of those to whom she was most attached; she suffered from the ingratitude of a son who did not love her, and of a minister whom she had helped to become great; she spent long years wandering about Europe, and ended a life of disappointment by a death in exile.

No one who read the unctuous declaration of the Bishop of Luçon, which he sent to be presented to Mary de' Medici, would have supposed that one expressing such exuberant loyalty to the Queen, would in time become the man whom, of all the world, she hated most. Richelieu saw that the Regent was for many years to be the dispenser of power, and that it was unlikely the ancient servants of Henry IV. could long enjoy her confidence. He at once

MARY DE' MEDICI.

FROM THE PAINTING BY F. PORBUS IN PRADO MUSEUM IN MADRID.

forwarded a declaration of fidelity, in which he mingled regrets for the loss of the King with praises for the wisdom of that virtuous princess whom God had sent for their needs, and prayed that death might remove him should he ever be wanting in fidelity to her. This paper, prepared with manifest care, did not reach its destination; the friends to whom it was intrusted decided that they would not present it to the Queen. Possibly they thought that the exuberance of its style might not produce the desired effect; probably there seemed to be no special need of a declaration of fidelity from the somewhat obscure Bishop of Luçon, and it might be interpreted as a bid for favour rather than as an outpouring of zeal.

Richelieu's ambition met with another disappointment in the same year, 1610. He sought to be elected one of the representatives to the assembly of the clergy that was soon to meet at Paris. His agents intrigued for him with much zeal and little success. He was still a young man, almost unknown outside of his own diocese; his clerical associates probably regarded his canvass as presumptuous, and they chose the Archbishop of Bordeaux and the Bishop of Aure as their representatives.

But he was not a man to be disheartened by rebuffs. He visited Paris from time to time, and endeavoured to obtain the confidence of those in power. The affairs of his diocese, though apparently not neglected, became less important to him as he watched with increasing attention the shifting scenes of political life, and at last the opportunity

came for the young aspirant to display his talents on a more conspicuous field than the poor and petty diocese of Luçon.

The feeble Government of Mary de' Medici was marked by disorder and discontent. She endeavoured to appease an unruly nobility by a profuse distribution of places and pensions, but the more she gave the more was demanded. Seeking tranquillity by bribery, she failed to obtain it when she could bribe no more; though the thrift of Sully had accumulated in the State treasury a sum great for those days it was soon dissipated by the Regent; the money so freely distributed among powerful nobles excited their cupidity and did not quiet their turbulence, and they were now ready to take up arms in order to compel further concessions from the Queen. The leader in these troubles was the Prince of Condé, whose rank and wealth made him a great personage in the State. He was closely related to Henry of Navarre, and only the lives of Louis XIII. and his younger brother stood between Condé and the throne. But his character was as weak as his power was great; the descendant of the heroic Condés, the leaders in the Huguenot wars, the father of the great Condé, the hero of Lens and Rocroi, was himself a prince of singularly unheroic mould. He was irresolute, timid, with no talent except for intrigue, and no passion except for money. Whatever his defects of character, his rank made him prominent, and he was the spokesman of a body of greedy and unruly noblemen. As their demands were not granted, in the spring of

1614 they took up arms and a petty civil war began. There was little fighting, but a good deal of pillaging, in which the armies on either side showed equal zeal. The Regent was unwilling to take vigorous steps against the insurgents, and by a liberal bestowal of places and pensions on a few of the leaders, she bought her peace. But as a result of this unimportant rising, the man who was to crush the unruly power of the French nobility found his opportunity to enter public life.

In order to make some pretence of zeal for public interests, Condé had asked that the States-General should be called together. When his personal demands were satisfied, he intimated to the Regent that this request would be waived, but the Queen's ministers advised her to convene the body and remove a pretext for future disturbances. Accordingly, in June, 1614, a summons was issued, bidding the clergy, nobles, and commons of France to choose representatives, who should meet at Sens in September, and advise as to the needs of the State. The States-General were not again to be convened until the famous assemblage of 1789; and that soon discarded the name as it did the nature of the body which for centuries had been a part of the French monarchy. There was a certain dramatic fitness that at the session in which the States-General, properly so called, passed out of French history, one of the members should be the man who was so to strengthen the French monarchy that for almost two hundred years the representatives of the French people were not again convened.

In the elections of members to the States-General, the influence of the Government was usually exercised without concealment. Discreet and well-affected persons received the support of the numerous functionaries who were connected with the central Government; ordinarily the number of those entitled to vote was small, and it was not difficult to secure the return of the candidate approved by the authorities. During the late troubles, Richelieu had shown his good-will and he was favourably regarded by those in power. He now announced his candidacy as a delegate of the clergy, and his ambition met with no obstacles. The clergy of Poitou assembled at Poitiers to elect their representatives, and the Bishop of Luçon and the Dean of Saint Hilaire were chosen without opposition.

The returns from the elections soon showed that the Government would have little trouble in controlling the deliberations of the body, and the place of meeting was accordingly changed to Paris. On the 26th of October, 1614, the representatives of the three estates gathered at the convent of the Augustines, and from there marched with much mediæval pomp to Notre Dame, where mass was celebrated; on the following day they held their first session at the Palais Bourbon. There the addresses of the estates were delivered to the King. The orators of the clergy and nobility remained standing while they presented their requests, but the spokesman of the third estate, to mark the inferiority of his order, pronounced his speech on bended knee. When these formalities were over, the representatives of

each estate met in separate session, and devoted themselves to the preparation of the cahiers, the memorials which contained their petitions to the sovereign.

The proceedings of the last States-General before the Revolution are unimportant in French history, and they were only important in Richelieu's career because they enabled him to gain a certain prominence and bring himself to the attention of the Court. His conduct during the session of the body was satisfactory to the Queen; he started no troublesome questions and his voice and vote were always at the command of the Government. Probably at her suggestion, he was chosen as spokesman of the clergy at the formal meeting, where the representatives of the three orders presented to the sovereign the result of their deliberations and asked his favourable consideration of their petitions. There was nothing in Richelieu's address to suggest his future career as a statesman, nor did it indicate any special ability. "He spoke for one long hour, and was listened to with attention," is the only comment made on his effort by a chronicler. The speech contained many tedious references to antiquity and many fulsome references to the Queen, and the only subject in which the orator showed special earnestness was in his plea for the employment of the clergy in the service of the State.

"Their profession," he said, "helps to fit them for the public service; they must possess capacity, be full of probity, and govern themselves with prudence, and these are the qualities necessary for the service of the State.

They are freer than others from the private interests which so often harm the public; observing celibacy, they have nothing to survive them but their souls, and these do not accumulate earthly treasures."

The States-General of 1614 came to an unsatisfactory and inglorious close. It was the fatal weakness of this body that it could only petition, it could not decree; when its requests were presented to the King, its mission was ended. As it had no control over the purse, there were no means by which it could enforce a speedy and a favourable answer to its demands. The deputies of the third estate wished to remain in session until the King had answered their petitions; if they once dispersed, they knew well that their cahiers would be of little more importance than waste paper. But the Government was eager to be rid of anything that bore the semblance of a representative body. When, on the day following the presentation of the cahiers, the deputies assembled at the convent of the Augustines, they found the hall empty of benches, and they were brusquely informed that their meetings must be discontinued. This announcement filled them with dismay. A member writes:

"One would beat his breast, reproaching his own remissness, and would fain atone for a session so unfruitful, so pernicious to the state and to the kingdom of a young prince, fearing the King's censure when age should teach him the disorders which the States had not removed, but had rather fomented and increased. Another planned his return, abhorred his stay at Paris, desired to see

his house, his wife, and friends, and to forget in their tenderness the memory of his grief at expiring liberty. 'What a shame,' said another, 'what confusion for France, to see those who represent her so little esteemed that they are not recognised as deputies, and are hardly treated as Frenchmen!'"

Their complaints were unheeded. A formal answer was sent to some of the requests, and the members were informed that the King, in his own good time, would answer the other cahiers when there was sufficient time for their examination. The representatives of the clergy and nobility had taken little interest in the proceedings of the States-General, and they were indifferent as to the results. The deputies of the third estate had been more zealous, and they now returned to their homes little pleased at the fruit of their labours. The States-General ceased to be of importance in the development of the French monarchy, there was no room for them in the centralised and despotic Government which was perfected by Richelieu and Louis XIV.

In one respect certainly the orator of the clergy at the States-General had been sincere — in his plea for the employment of the clergy. He strongly desired that the Bishop of Luçon should receive political preferment, and when the session of the States had closed, he remained for the most part at Paris, cultivating the favour of the Queen and her ministers, and seeking a speedy opportunity for his own entrance into public affairs.

He made many friends, who watched his interests

and were ready to speak a good word for the politic young bishop. Some of them complained that, when Richelieu attained to power, his gratitude to early friends was not such as they expected from his former protestations of affection. It was doubtless so. Richelieu was absorbed in his ambition; on his death-bed, he declared that he had no enemies but those of the State, and he might have said the same thing about his friends. To the men who could assist him in his political schemes, like Father Joseph and Mazarin, he was always constant; those who aided him in his obscurity but could render no further service, occupied little place in his mind or memory.

With the regency of Mary de' Medici began the great prosperity of the Concinis. They had long enjoyed the Queen's good-will, but not until she attained to power could she show the lengths to which her favour would go. The influence of the Concinis in French politics was so extraordinary, and they were so connected with the beginnings of Richelieu's career, that some account of their rise is not without interest. Leonora Dori was the daughter of a Florentine carpenter and the foster-sister of Mary de' Medici. This early relation ripened into a lifelong affection. Leonora was an ignorant woman, vulgar in her tastes and deformed in her person, but she became the trusted adviser of the princess, and when the latter was called to the throne of France, she took Leonora with her to Paris, and also a handsome young Italian gentleman of good birth and no means, called Concino Concini.

CONCINO CONCINI, MARQUIS D'ANCRE, MARSHAL OF FRANCE.

FROM A PAINTING BY LECOCQ.

Concino presently married the Queen's waiting-woman and friend, and the two exercised over the weak mind of their patroness a strong and unwholesome influence.

After Henry's death, the Queen was the head of the Government, and the Concinis became great personages in the State. Whether the Queen was influenced by her ancient fondness for her foster-sister, or by a more recent affection for her foster-sister's husband, wealth and office were showered upon the fortunate man. He was made a marquis, he was made a marshal, he was first gentleman of the chamber, he was the governor of Amiens, and lieutenant-general of Picardy. Years before, he had arrived in France a penniless adventurer. "When I came here," he said, "I did not have a sou, and I owed eight thousand crowns."

Now his wealth was estimated at ten millions. This extraordinary prosperity was not borne with meekness, and naturally Concini was the object of almost universal dislike. But, for the present, his star seemed in the ascendant, and he declared that he would see how far fortune could carry a mortal.

In the meantime, Richelieu had been diligent in seeking to secure for himself some position at the Court, and his efforts met with success. He had powerful friends, and he never allowed them to become slack in seeking his advancement. In 1615, Louis XIII., then a boy of fourteen, was married to Anne of Austria, a daughter of Philip III. of Spain, who was a few months younger than her husband. Though the new Queen was only a child, she was

surrounded by a crowd of officials, the number of whom corresponded to her dignity rather than to her years, and among them the Bishop of Luçon received the appointment of almoner. The duties of his position were light, but it gave him a recognised position at Court, and enabled him to make further progress in the favour of the Queen-mother. His action as a deputy in the States-General had brought him into closer relations with those in power. He flattered himself, and not without reason, that he was now regarded by the Queen-mother and Concini as one who might prove a faithful and useful adviser. He was employed in various confidential missions: he was sent to treat with the Prince of Condé, who was engaged in one of his frequent revolts, and afterwards he acted as secret ambassador to the Duke of Nevers, a nobleman sufficiently powerful and sufficiently unruly to treat with the King almost on the footing of a foreign potentate. In all these matters he acquitted himself with skill; he acquired a reputation for adroitness, activity, and unscrupulousness, and was regarded as a useful and rising man. The character of the Concinis gained them many enemies, but the young Bishop of Luçon was not a man to antagonise those from whom he could hope for promotion. He assured Concini of his devotion and succeeded in obtaining the Italian's confidence. "I entreat you to believe," the bishop wrote the favourite, "that my promises will be followed by fulfilment, and that while you do me the honour to love me, I shall always be able to serve you right worthily."

It is probable that we can see traces of Richelieu's vigour in a step now taken by the Queen-mother. When he became the ruler of France, there was no nobleman so powerful that the Government could not safely treat him as it did any other subject, but this was far from being the case in the early years of the reign of Louis XIII. The Prince of Condé was so great a personage that Mary de' Medici long hesitated to take any vigorous measures against him, but stirred into action, either by the counsels of Concini, or the influence of the young and resolute Bishop of Luçon, she now ordered Condé's arrest. He submitted without resistance, and when three years later he was set at liberty, he left the prison walls with his youthful turbulence permanently tamed. The way was now opened for the ascendancy of the Italian favourite, who, with infinitely less capacity, anticipated his compatriot Mazarin in becoming the head of the French government. He had long mistrusted the ministers; he now resolved to bring about their overthrow, and fill their places with men devoted to his own interests.

Concini had overthrown his most dangerous rival, and he wished to have only friends in the royal council. With the exception of Sully, the ministers of Henry IV. were still in office, but they were old and feeble men, and while they retained their positions, they had lost their power. They were now dismissed and their places filled by men selected by the favourite. All of them were comparatively obscure, and, with one exception, after a brief enjoyment of power, they returned to the obscurity from

which they sprang. But, in 1616, the Bishop of Luçon received his appointment as one of the King's secretaries of state. He was only thirty-one. With such skill and industry had he pressed his fortunes, that two years after he arrived at Paris as a deputy to the States-General, an obscure ecclesiastic, holding a petty bishopric, he had gained the confidence of the Queen and her advisers, and now became one of the ministers of the State. A few weeks before, he had been chosen as ambassador to Spain, but he gladly relinquished this employment to become a member of the Government.

Notwithstanding the rapidity of his elevation, Richelieu was still a very obscure man; he was little known in the community, and no one dreamed of the career that lay before him. He had made his way into office by attaching himself closely to those who had places to bestow; there was nothing to show that this adroit, eager office-seeker had the qualities of a great statesman. He owed his appointment to the good-will of Concini. A man of Richelieu's sagacity must have known the weakness of Concini's character; he must have realised that the extraordinary elevation of this vulgar Italian was an outrage and a scandal, but the new minister was little troubled by the road he pursued, so long as it led to the goal he desired. Doubtless he overestimated the duration of Concini's power; but no one could have guessed the tragic end which the favourite was so soon to meet. The King was still a boy, and Richelieu believed that if he possessed the confidence of the Queen-mother and her favourite,

he could disregard the caprices of a youth who showed neither the ability nor the desire to perform the duties of his office.

The new appointments were greeted with the disfavour that attended most of Concini's acts. The ministers were stigmatised as his creatures, as men without experience in the affairs of State, and whose promotion was due to their subservience to the caprices, the vices, and the passions of the Italian favourites. Even those who looked upon Richelieu's promotion with approval little imagined what his future policy was to be. The papal nuncio wrote that the new minister was eminent alike for eloquence, virtue, and zeal for religion, and they could ask no better man in this position than the Bishop of Luçon. The Spanish minister was still warmer in his praise. "He is my intimate friend," he wrote. "In all France they could not have chosen a person more devoted to the service of God, of our Crown, and the public weal." The Venetian ambassadors, usually so sagacious in their judgments, were no nearer right. They declared that the new minister belonged to the Spanish party, was constantly found at the Spanish Embassy, and was reported to receive a pension from the Spanish Government. Opposition to Spain was to be the chief feature of Richelieu's foreign policy, and the papacy was to find in him no such faithful servant as the nuncio hoped. But if the new minister cherished the designs which later he was to put into execution, he was shrewd enough to conceal them. His first aim was to gain power, and if the Queen

and Concini were friendly to Spain, Richelieu was not the man to delay his entry into public life by any Quixotic opposition to their views. He constantly assured Concini of his zeal for his interests, and his devotion to Concini's wife excited scandal in the community without arousing jealousy in the husband. "I can never discharge the obligations that I owe you," he wrote the marshal. "I can only show in all my actions that I have ever before my eyes the favours which I have received from you and the maréchale."

With such surroundings and under such patronage, Richelieu began his career as a minister of the State. The power which had been so eagerly sought soon slipped from his grasp, and five months later he was involved in the ruin that befell his patron. But though his term of office was brief, though he was under the necessity of yielding obedience to a presumptuous favourite and an unwise Queen, yet in this short time Richelieu showed the sagacity and resolution which he was to display on so great a scale during long years of untrammelled authority. In truth he was born to be a ruler of men; however tortuous the paths which he followed in the pursuit of power, when he had attained it he was, from the necessity of his being, the exponent of his own convictions. He could appear to adopt the views of those whose assistance he was not yet strong enough to disregard, but his actions were sure to bear the impress of his genius and his will.

In his instructions to Schomberg, the ambassador to Germany, the minister outlined the policy which

later he was to carry into execution. They showed unusual maturity and a remarkable boldness of conception in a young man who for the first time found himself in political office. Most men thus situated are quite content to adopt the traditions of their predecessors, but Richelieu had already clearly in his mind the rôle which he intended France should play in the affairs of Germany and of Europe. The Queen-mother was friendly to Spain, and it had been the chief object of her policy to ally the two kingdoms by the marriages of her children; by the Spanish, Richelieu was regarded as a trusty friend, and yet the young minister had already resolved that so far as in him lay France should be, not an adjunct of Spain, but the paramount power of Europe. "It is a calumny," he wrote Schomberg, "to say that we are so much under the influence of Spain or Rome that we should embrace the interests of either to our own prejudice or that of our ancient alliances. . . . We do not desire the advancement of Spain."

Nor was he less clear in outlining his policy toward those of the reformed faith, in which he diverged widely from the principles accepted at Rome and Madrid. "The different faiths which prevail among us do not render us different states," he wrote. "We are united under a prince in whose service no Catholic is so blind as to estimate a Spaniard better than a French Huguenot." And the future cardinal traced in no uncertain lines his future policy, that Huguenots who were loyal to the King should receive the same favour as Catholics; that France,

instead of being the servant of Spain, should seek to establish her own power at Spain's expense, and that among the German states her alliances should be formed, not upon considerations of religion, but of national advantage.

In the internal troubles that were chronic under Mary de' Medici's weak rule, Richelieu showed the same firmness; it was plain that the day when rebellious nobles would be bribed into subjection had gone by, if he remained in power. His Episcopal robes did not prevent his assuming the somewhat incongruous duties of minister of war, and he performed them with indefatigable zeal. As a result of Condé's arrest, the dukes of Nevers, Bouillon, and other great nobles had once again taken up arms, and were in open rebellion. Richelieu devoted all his energy to raising money, levying soldiers, equipping armies, and he insisted that those who took up arms against their sovereign should be reduced to obedience by force and not by favour; that they should be punished as rebels, instead of being rewarded as repentant sinners. If Richelieu had remained in power, his strong hand would soon have been laid heavily on unruly nobles. But when the fortunes of the insurgents seemed desperate, the aspect of affairs suddenly changed, and the new ministers found themselves involved in the overthrow of the favourite to whom they owed their elevation.

In the intrigues of the Court, and in Richelieu's own plans for his advancement, one person had been left out of the account, and that person was

the King. Louis XIII. was indeed only a youth of sixteen, immature, ignorant, untrained in public affairs. It was often said that his mother, desirous only of prolonging her own rule, purposely neglected the education of her son. Probably the deficiencies of his training were due to remissness rather than to design, but the result was the same. The King was very imperfectly educated, and his companions were for the most part of low birth and questionable character. Like many other French kings, Louis found his chief occupation in hunting; he hunted on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, and unless there was something to interfere, he hunted on the other days also. The hours when he was not occupied with the chase were employed in juvenile sports. For a youth of such tastes the most important official was the falconer, and for this position there was selected a man named Luines, a country gentleman of quiet manners, small means, and forty years of age. It was thought that a middle-aged man, with no showy qualities, would not obtain any dangerous influence over the young sovereign, but in this opinion the Queen-mother and her advisers fell into error. Luines was admirably fitted to please a shy and diffident youth. He was skilled in all branches of the chase, and that endeared him to his pupil; he was assiduous in his attentions, and if he lacked in brilliancy, the lack was acceptable to a dull boy.

Though the King was timid and ill-educated, he did not like to be neglected. He was jealous of power, even if he did not know how to exercise it,

and he resented his own unimportance in a Government of which he was nominally the head. The injudicious conduct of the favourite made it easy to arouse the King's ill-will towards him. There were many ready to excite his jealousy at the splendour of Concini's surroundings, to call attention to the long retinue of attendants by which the favourite was followed, and to contrast this with the scanty retinue of the King of France. Concini was often lacking in courtesy, and it was said he was injudicious enough to refuse some requests of the young King for money; if Louis showed no indignation at such rebuffs, he did not forget them.

His discontent at Concini's conduct led to secret plots to get rid of the powerful and odious favourite. The obscurity of the council that deliberated on the matter shows that the King was left in the hands of unfit companions; it consisted of the falconer, a gardener, a clerk, a soldier, a priest, and two adventurers. But, however humble their rank, they knew enough to keep their secret, and Louis himself through all his life was a master of dissimulation.

Under the laws of France, he had now been of age for nearly three years, yet he proceeded with a plot to arrest one of his own subjects with as much stealth as would a Nihilist to-day, planning the murder of a sovereign. It was finally decided that the marshal should be arrested, and if he made any resistance he should be killed. When such were the orders, one could be certain that those carrying them into effect would discover signs of resistance in their victim. The execution of the order was

confided to a captain of the guard named Vitry, and on the 24th of April, 1617, with a small band of followers, he took his station in the inner court of the Louvre. As the marshal came from his residence, Vitry stepped up to him, and putting his hand upon his arm, said, "The King has commanded me to seize your person." "Me!" cried Concini, putting his hand to his sword. "Yes, you," replied Vitry. At the same time three or four pistols were fired at the favourite and he fell dead on the spot. His followers made no resistance, and the body was plundered, stripped, and left where it fell.

On the same night the remains of the ill-fated favourite were secretly buried in the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. They were not long left at rest; the brutality of the French populace has often been excited by the taste of blood, and the mob now broke into the church, the body was dug up and hung by the heels on the gallows by the Pont Neuf. There it was exposed to every sort of brutal dismemberment; the limbs were hacked off and carried through the streets; one man tore out the heart and broiled it over the coals, and these insults were accompanied by obscene songs about the loves of the favourite and the Queen-mother. Richelieu's carriage passed while the mob were engaged in these brutalities, and he was alarmed lest his identity should be known and he receive rough treatment from those who regarded him as a follower of Concini, but he shouted lustily *Vive le roi!* and was able to get through without being recognised.

In the meantime, all was exultation among the

personal followers of the King. As Vitry returned from the assassination, Louis cried out, "Great thanks to you; now I am King." A crowd gathered about, Louis was mounted on a billiard table, where he declared that Vitry had acted with his approval, and proceeded to issue orders amid much excitement. Richelieu seems to have been uncertain as to his own fate, when he made his way through the assemblage after hearing of the murder. He had not been wholly unmindful of the vicissitudes of politics and had made some overtures to Luines; if we can trust his own statement, Luines now told him that he could retain his office, but he felt that honour required he should resign it and follow the fortunes of the Queen. It is unlikely that such an offer was made with any idea that it would be accepted, and still less likely that if Richelieu had the choice, he would have refused the power that was dear to him from any feeling of devotion to the Queen-mother. At all events, he was coldly received by the King, and soon made his retreat.

The old ministers had been hastily summoned, and Richelieu entered the council-chamber, but he was received with averted looks; no one spoke with him, he took no part in the conferences, and when asked in what capacity he was there, he left the room. He saw that his retirement from Court was inevitable, and that if he hoped for a return to favour he must accept quietly and promptly his present disgrace.

Either because he had to some extent gained Luines's confidence, or because his Episcopal robes

were a certain protection, he was treated with less severity than his associates. Barbin was thrown into the Bastille, and was afterwards sentenced to life imprisonment, a penalty which was indeed remitted a few years later. Richelieu was treated with courtesy, if not with cordiality. He resigned his office and was presently ordered to retire to Luçon; in his own phrase, he was exiled to his bishopric.

There was much justification for Concini's overthrow, and possibly his enemies were right in thinking that assassination was the only means by which his power in the State could be destroyed, but only avarice and blind animosity could explain the cruel treatment inflicted upon his wife. The sudden height to which this Italian serving-woman had risen, the jealousy excited by her elevation, the intrigues of courtiers and politicians in which she was involved, affected the good judgment she once possessed. It was not strange that a woman, naturally ignorant and superstitious, and involved in danger and perplexity, should have sought refuge in incantations and sortilege and similar nonsense, and these things were now made the pretext for her ruin.

No sooner was Concini murdered, than the royal guards made their way to his wife's apartment. She had already heard of the catastrophe, and, hiding in the bed her jewels that were of enormous value, she placed herself upon it. The guards entered the chamber and ransacked it. They found and seized the jewels, and carried the maréchale to the Bastille. She had done nothing which deserved any severer penalty than banishment, but Luines and

his associates were resolved to have her life and her money. She was tried for being a sorceress, and it was shown that she had a nativity of the King in her possession, that she prepared wax tablets for some secret purpose, had made solemn offering of a cock to some unknown deity, and had consulted with so-called sorcerers and fortune-tellers. Upon such evidence, the Parliament found her guilty of treason against God and King, and sentenced her to be beheaded. She met her fate with courage and resolution. "How many people have gathered to see one unhappy and oppressed woman!" she said, as she was driven through the great crowd to the place of execution.

The property of Concini and his wife was confiscated, but the State gained little by it. Luines obtained the most of it for himself and the rest for his followers. The wealth and honours the Concinis had accumulated during seven years, to the great scandal of the community, were acquired by Luines almost in a day; he was made a duke, and a lieutenant-general, and first gentleman of the chamber, and presently he received the sword of the constable, the highest military rank in France. He had never fought a battle, and the office which had been held by soldiers like Guesclin and Bourbon and Montmorenci was now bestowed on a man whose skill had only been displayed in taming and flying falcons.

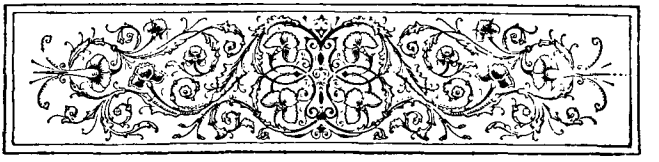
The assassination of Concini was followed by the overthrow of those identified with his fortune. When Mary de' Medici heard of the murder, she

LEONORA DORI, WIFE OF CONCINI.

cried: "I have reigned seven years. There is only left for me now a crown in heaven." She was right in saying that her rule in an earthly kingdom was ended. Luines wished to remove the possibility of her exerting any influence over Louis, and this was not difficult. Louis XIII. was a singularly cold character, and he viewed the most of mankind with complete indifference. For some few favourites he showed, indeed, a jealous and capricious fondness, but in that list his mother was not found. Moreover, Mary de' Medici had bestowed on her son little love and less care; in an amiable character, natural affection might have survived neglect, but Louis's character was not amiable.

She sent to the King for information as to her future position. She was told that Louis would always treat her as his mother, but the ominous words were added that, in the future, he wished to be the King. He was obstinate in his refusal to see her, and negotiations were carried on between Richelieu, in her behalf, and Luines, on the part of the monarch. It was at last decided that the Queen-mother should retire to Blois, where she was to be furnished with a suitable establishment but could take no part in the affairs of the State. The mother and son had a farewell interview, but they indulged only in formal courtesies. Louis desired to have his mother out of the way; she did not regret leaving him, and if she regretted leaving power, she was too proud to show it. At the head of a long procession, which was justly likened to a funeral cortége, she drove away from the Louvre. Her rule had been

marked by prodigality, weakness, and bad judgment, and it was now ended forever. In the last of the long line of carriages could be seen the pointed beard and pale face of the Bishop of Luçon; he was involved in the odium which rested on the followers of Concini, and the only place now open to him was that of adviser to a queen in disgrace, the rôle of prime minister in a phantom court. His rapid rise had been followed by what seemed a complete overthrow. But he was a man of rare ability in intrigue; even his enemies acknowledged that in this young bishop was combined an amount of vigour and sagacity not to be found in any of his associates. If the prospect was dark, the events of a few years were to show that it was not hopeless. Seven years from the time that Richelieu left the Louvre, the disgraced follower of a disgraced princess, he returned to it, arrayed in the robes of a cardinal, to assume the position of chief minister of the King.



CHAPTER III

THE YEARS OF DISGRACE

1617–1624

DURING the seven years that followed the assassination of Concini, Richelieu did not play an important part in French politics. He attracted little attention except from those familiar with the intrigues of the Court, and until he was made a cardinal and again received as a member of the ministry, he continued to be, comparatively speaking, an obscure man. We judge his early life from the light thrown upon it by his subsequent career, but until he was nearly forty Richelieu had not achieved any national reputation, and was little known except by those connected with the royal Court or the Court of the exiled Queen. In the contemporary chronicles and memoirs, which were completed before 1621, it is curious to see how little mention is made of the Bishop of Luçon. In some his name does not appear, in others he receives casual mention as a person of secondary importance requiring no special notice. In the *Chronicles* of Du

Tillet, published in 1618, the name of Richelieu does not appear; in *A Decade of History under Louis XIII.* by Le Grain, published in 1619, he is briefly mentioned, and the historian says that he was incapable of filling the office of secretary for foreign affairs; in the *Annals of France*, by Savaron, published in 1621, he is given a brief and rather contemptuous notice.

So far as he was known at this time, his reputation was not above reproach. All acknowledged, indeed, that he was a man of ability, but he was believed to be tortuous in his policy, selfish in his purposes, and unscrupulous in his actions; nor was this estimate altogether wrong. No one suspected that the aspiring and intriguing bishop was to become one of the world's great politicians; no one appreciated the breadth of his judgment, or the unswerving courage and resolution with which he would rule the State; his extraordinary qualities could only be displayed when upon him rested the responsibilities of government.

Richelieu retired with the Queen-mother to Blois and was appointed chief of her council. His position was, however, a curiously ambiguous one; if he professed to remain constant to the Queen's fortunes, he lost no opportunity to ingratiate himself with those who enjoyed the King's confidence, and he accepted his new office only on receiving the royal consent. He reported regularly to Luines the condition of affairs at Blois, rendering an exact account of the Queen's actions, in order, as he says, that it might be seen that there was in them nothing to

excite suspicion. "I bind myself to the King," he writes, "to prevent all cabals and plots; not only will I inform him of them, but in time to frustrate them."

Notwithstanding Richelieu's professions of zeal in the royal service, perhaps because they were so profuse, he did not obtain the confidence of Luines or Louis XIII. His character did not excite confidence; the stronger the belief in his ability, the greater was the fear of his double-dealing and the apprehension that he was not a safe person to leave as the Queen's adviser. At all events, he remained, as he himself says, a constant object of calumny and slander.

At last he abandoned his position with the Queen and retired to his bishopric. Though he acted on no formal order of the Court, Luines was well pleased at the retirement of the man whose ability he feared and of whose fidelity he was never sure. Mary de' Medici was both grieved and enraged at his departure. "To send away the Bishop of Luçon," she wrote Luines, "is a proof that I am treated by the King not as a mother, but as a slave." "I beseech you with all my heart," she wrote her son, "do not now refuse the favour you have granted in allowing the Bishop of Luçon to remain with me. Except the prosperity of your reign, there is nothing in the world which I desire so much." Her request was not heeded; Louis wrote to Richelieu commending his retirement to Luçon, where he could perform the duties of his office, exhort his flock, and obey the commands of his God and his

King. It is doubtful if Richelieu found any comfort in such commendation, but he meekly replied, that he had now no care except to pray God for the King's prosperity, and to occupy himself with his books and the duties of his profession.

He affected a philosophy which he did not feel. "I live contentedly in my diocese," he writes, "engaged with my books and the duties of my office. . . . I am resolved to pass my time peaceably among my books and my neighbours; . . . thus I shall be free from calumny."

Though he led a discreet life, avoiding dangerous complications, and writing nothing more compromising than theological dissertations, the pretended recluse had his ear open for any sound which could indicate that he was to be recalled to active political life. But if he thirsted for it he had the good judgment to conceal his eagerness; he was young, he had confidence in his ability and his fortune, and he waited, not patiently, but silently, for his hour to come.

Prudent as was his conduct, it did not satisfy his enemies; they still feared his intrigues with Mary de' Medici, and in April, 1718, he was ordered to leave his diocese and to retire to Avignon in the south of France, far distant from Blois and the Court of the Queen-mother. "The visits and assemblies, the coming and going of divers persons wherever you are, which give offence and cause mistrust in many of our subjects," were, so Richelieu was informed by the King's letter, among the reasons which led to this step. In Avignon, which

was not even in French territory, he was as effectually removed from French politics as if he had been exiled to Rome. The order was alike unexpected and unwelcome, but it was obeyed with the promptitude by which the disgraced minister sought to prove his submission to the King's will. The letter reached him on Wednesday of Holy Week; he did not even wait for the Easter celebration, but on Good Friday started on the long and painful journey to his new place of exile.

Richelieu found occupation in those days of trial by devoting himself to polemical writing, and he published a treatise against the Huguenots. "I will say nothing of it myself," he writes in his memoirs, speaking of his book entitled *A Defence of the Principal Points of the Catholic Faith*, "I leave it to the judgment of those into whose hands it has come." That judgment cannot be an especially favourable one. Richelieu's controversial works were characterised by the dogmatism that is usually found in such productions; probably they pleased zealous partisans; certainly they did not convince opponents, nor do they interest posterity.

His life at Avignon was a melancholy one. Early success had stimulated his ambition, and when he had once tasted the sweets of power, its loss was gall and wormwood. Moreover, there was no certainty that his chance would return; the King looked upon him with distrust, and he could no longer use his position with the Queen-mother to secure his recall to the royal councils. His letters are full of dejection. At times he prepared lengthy memorials which

should justify him in the mind of the King, but, discreetly, he never forwarded them. Silent submission was more apt to secure a return of favour than querulous argument. His health was infirm; in his gloom he thought that death might be near, and prepared his will. It is a curious contrast with the testament that became effective at his death a quarter of a century later. Then he left palaces to the King, dukedoms and millions of money to his nephews; now he disposed of a few thousand livres, the most of which he devoted to the uses of his diocese at Luçon. He gave, also, some farewell advice to his successors in the bishopric, in which he bade them reside in the diocese, visit the flock, and encourage by their example the clergy under their charge. Such were the views of the disappointed politician who expected to close in exile an unsuccessful career.

He did not lack friends who sought his return to favour. The Pope himself asked, not indeed that Richelieu should be restored to office, but that he should not, by exile to a foreign city, be prevented from attending to the needs of his flock. "If M. de Luçon had been content to be a good bishop in his diocese," was the curt reply, "he would not be where he is."

While the bishop sought consolation for the loss of office in exposing the manifold errors of Calvinistic theology, the Queen-mother remained at Blois, discontented with her lot, and constantly quarrelling with those who were in favour with the King. These disputes were not very important, but the

Queen's ill-humour at last led her to take a decided step. If she was not kept in actual captivity at Blois, she was under strict surveillance, and of this she resolved to rid herself. Plans of resistance were concocted with discontented noblemen, of whom there was always a plentiful supply, and in February, 1619, accompanied only by her maid, she escaped out of a window at some peril of her life, and made her way to Loches, where she joined the powerful and unruly Duke of Épernon.

This escapade brought Richelieu once again into the political field. He had conducted himself with great circumspection during his year's stay at Avignon, avoiding any compromising intimacy with suspected intriguers, and devoting himself zealously to polemical treatises, as a faithful servant of God and the King. His prudence now met its reward; from the depths of gloom in which he was plunged, he was suddenly called back to the field of intrigue and ambition that was so dear to him. Luines realised that Mary de' Medici was more apt to involve the kingdom in confusion with the reckless advisers by whom she was now surrounded, than if she were counselled by Richelieu. He might be designing and double-dealing, but at least he was sagacious, and he knew that both his own interests and those of the Queen would be advanced by a discreet policy. Father Joseph was already his friend, and was among those who declared that it was the part of wisdom to recall him from exile. Such counsels were now received favourably, and a brother of the Capuchin was despatched to Avignon, with an amiable letter

from the King, bidding Richelieu forthwith to rejoin the Queen-mother and resume his position as her adviser. He did not need to be twice bidden; on March 7, 1619, the messenger of good tidings arrived at Avignon; on the following day, though the weather was of unusual severity, the ground covered with snow, the roads almost impassable, and the country infested by lawless marauders, Richelieu started to rejoin Mary de' Medici. After nineteen days of hardship, he met the Queen-mother at Angoulême. His political life was resumed, and was to continue with ever-increasing success and glory.

It was thought that Richelieu's eagerness for a return to favour would make him a prudent counsellor, and this expectation was not disappointed. But, in fact, neither the Queen-mother nor her followers were in any condition to resist the royal army, and Richelieu wisely advised her to make terms. Luines was quite ready to grant her anything but a restoration to power, and, accordingly, she received the government of Anjou, and her followers were rewarded in proportion to their ability to be troublesome.

The statesman who was to incur the bitterest enmity of Mary de' Medici was now her chosen adviser; his counsels were judicious, and probably she could have had no better, though he never forgot the prospect of his own advancement in the policy which he dictated to the Queen. It is not important to trace the complications that were constantly arising between the King and the Queen-mother. Once or twice she went so far as to take

up arms against her son, though always under the pretext of seeking his advantage by driving away evil counsellors. None of these movements were of any importance, and they were soon terminated by new treaties and new promises that were rarely observed on either side.

Richelieu was firmly entrenched in the Queen's good-will, and whether her favourites were Italian adventurers or French bishops, she was always ready to do her utmost to advance their interests. It had been very vaguely hinted in 1619 that Richelieu should receive the royal nomination to a cardinalate, and, subsequently, Louis wrote to Paul V. asking that the Archbishop of Toulouse and the Bishop of Luçon might receive that dignity. It was the recognised usage of the papal Court to appoint a certain number of cardinals at the request of great Catholic powers like Spain and France, and the royal nomination, unless revoked, was almost certain in time to procure the desired honour. But promotion often came slowly, even when the representatives of the King were earnest in their demands, and it was not always the case that a formal nomination was urged with much zeal. This was undoubtedly the trouble with Richelieu's candidacy. The nomination was made, and there the matter rested. At the end of another brief insurrection, in 1620, his promotion was made one of the conditions granted the Queen-mother, and the King at her request sent a letter of recommendation. Probably Louis himself was willing that Richelieu should become a cardinal, but his advisers thought otherwise. Between

Richelieu and Luines there was some formal pretence of friendship, but the King's favourite distrusted both the capacity and the character of the ambitious bishop, and had no desire to see his influence increased by the great dignity of the cardinalate. Richelieu was ungrateful to him, so he told the papal nuncio, and he desired that his promotion should be indefinitely postponed. Even in this expression of his wish the favourite showed his fear of the aspiring bishop; he insisted on profound secrecy, and said that Richelieu would at once stir up new insurrections if he suspected opposition to his advancement. After Luines's death, Louis told Richelieu that probably he would never have received a cardinal's hat had the constable lived. It is most unlikely that he would have received the promotion if Luines had both lived and continued in power, but it is doubtful if a man of no more ability than the royal falconer could permanently have kept out of office a person of Richelieu's skill in intrigue.

Luines held his power until his death, yet it is not sure, had his life been spared, that he could have much longer retained it. His favour was less odious to the community than that of Concini, but the difference was chiefly due to the fact that one was a foreigner and the other a Frenchman. In eagerness for gain, Luines in no way yielded to his predecessor; in a few years he accumulated an enormous estate, and he founded one of the great families of the French nobility. However successful in heaping on himself honours and wealth, he was a man of

DUKE OF LUINES, CONSTABLE OF FRANCE.

FROM A PAINTING BY ROBERT FLEURY.

very moderate capacity, and some of his defects excited the contempt of his master. Louis XIII. inherited the martial tastes of his ancestors, and was well versed in the details of warfare; not fitted, perhaps, to plan a campaign, had he been an officer he would have seen that his regiment was carefully drilled and well equipped; if he had not been a king, he would have made an excellent lieutenant of infantry.

Luines, on the other hand, was unfamiliar with military affairs. When the Huguenots took up arms, Luines, with his new dignity of constable, undertook the command of the army that marched against them. But his inexperience was sneered at even by the common soldiers, and it was not certain that he possessed the personal bravery that might have atoned for lack of technical skill. Louis's disposition was jealous, and he was already discontented at the power and wealth to which the favourite had attained, even though he had himself bestowed them; he was a good soldier, and his contempt was excited by Luines's failure as a general.

The favourite avoided the danger of overthrow by an early death. Though he kept out of the way of bullets during the campaign, he could not escape the exposures of service in the field. He was attacked by fever, and on December 14, 1621, he died. His death left the way open for Richelieu's advancement. Paul V. knew that the promotion of the Bishop of Luçon would not be regarded as a boon by Louis's favourite, and the papacy rarely neglected excuses for delay. The cardinalate was a great

honour, and the contest for it could be utilised by the Pope; when once it was bestowed, of many zealous supplicants there would only remain one ingrate. But after Luines's death, the French representatives demanded Richelieu's promotion of the new Pope in a manner which showed that they were at last in earnest, and it was not long delayed. On September 5, 1622, the elevation of the Bishop of Luçon to the cardinalate was announced by Pope Gregory XV. Richelieu was only thirty-eight when he received the highest honour, except the papacy, which the Church could bestow, and his early promotion was due, not to any great distinction which he had won in Church or State, but to the skill with which he had ingratiated himself into the confidence, the good-will, perhaps even the affection, of Mary de' Medici.

His newly acquired rank as Cardinal rendered his political advancement more easy. He had been regarded as an adroit and able man, but in addition to this he was now a prince of the Church. His position gave him rank, entitled him to a precedence, such as were enjoyed by few even of the greatest dignitaries. A man possessing the power and immunities of a Roman cardinal was a formidable candidate for political position, and with Richelieu the dignity of the cardinalate, like the lesser dignity of the bishopric of Luçon, was chiefly valuable because it was a stepping-stone for his political ambition.

He soon resigned his bishopric. He was now too great a man to disquiet himself about the affairs of

an obscure diocese; he wrote to the members of the chapter, thanking them for their conduct toward him in the past and resigning his office as their chief pastor. His entire attention was given to securing the place in the royal council from which he had been driven five years before. The position in Louis's confidence which had been held by Luines remained for some time unoccupied; the charge of the Government was intrusted to the Prince of Condé and to others of less note, but among them there was no one who possessed the ability to rule the State. Richelieu, in the meantime, continued to be the Queen-mother's chief adviser, while endeavouring in every way to gain the confidence of the King. In 1621, when the campaign was progressing against the Huguenots, he wrote to an acquaintance, bidding him not to forget those who had no friends but their breviary and their books, and could only pray God for the success and glory of the Church and State. Richelieu's attention was never wholly given to his prayers or his breviary, and as little now as at any other part of his career. Years after, Louis, in one of his fits of petulance, complained that Richelieu held many benefices, but did not read his breviary. If he read it at all, he found time for other occupations.

After the death of Luines, the relations of the King with his mother became more friendly. She lived at the Luxembourg, and her influence over her son, if not entirely restored, was again very considerable. Richelieu was her trusted adviser,

and she believed that his restoration to office would secure for her a paramount influence in the affairs of the State. There was no one who developed sufficient ability to block the road of the aspiring Cardinal; the ministry was composed of men below mediocrity, united only in jealousy of Richelieu and a strong desire to keep the adviser of the Queen-mother from obtaining a place in the King's council. But if they had the desire to hinder Richelieu's ambition, they had not the ability. The leader in the council was La Vieuville, the superintendent of finance, a man of small capacity and of questionable honesty. He soon despaired of holding his position unaided, and sought to secure the good-will of Mary de' Medici by opening the door of the council-chamber for the return of Richelieu. Apparently, he expected to have the benefit of the Cardinal's resolution and sagacity and yet himself hold the chief place, and such a hope illustrates how little Richelieu's character was as yet understood.

The King, who afterwards supported the Cardinal so long and faithfully, was very unwilling to intrust him with office; he did not like the man, and he still associated him with the followers of Concini, all of whom he had held in aversion. "There is a man who would like to be in my council," he said, as Richelieu passed by, "but I cannot bring myself to that step after all he has done against me." "I know him better than you," he said to Mary de' Medici; "he is a man of inordinate ambition." But the King did not withstand the requests of his minister, reinforced by the solicitations of his

mother. If we can confide in Richelieu's memoirs, he sought to be excused when the offer was made him; he declared that even if God had granted him certain qualities of mind, they were accompanied by such weakness of body that he could not be of service amid the noise and disorder of the world; he preferred the position of an occasional counsellor, to the laborious task of one charged with the duties of office. His excuses, he tells us, were not received, and certainly they were not intended to be; in April, 1624, he again became one of the ministers of Louis XIII.

La Vieuville not only found Richelieu willing to accept the burdens of office, but he soon discovered that in any ministry of which the Cardinal formed a part, he was sure to be the head. In August, 1624, La Vieuville was arrested on the charge of corruption in office, a charge probably well founded, and he was confined in the château of Amboise. Richelieu became the head of the council; his associates, during all his career, were merely assistants to do his bidding; his will was absolute and uncontrolled, and the other members of the ministry did not presume to question it. He would brook no division of authority; he was chief minister and practically sole minister for over eighteen years, and the power which he had so long desired and for which he had so indefatigably laboured was never to be wrested from his grasp.

Richelieu's continuance in power was in a great measure due to his fitness to exercise it, but if he had relied on that alone he would not have died

prime minister. A statesman in those days did not owe his position to the public; he was not at the mercy of popular caprice; public opinion had little means of expression, and most of the community regarded affairs of State as something far removed from them, with which they had no concern. But at any moment Richelieu could be dismissed from office by his royal master, and in Louis XIII. he had to deal with a man of jealous and capricious character. The King was by no means a *fainéant* monarch, he was not absorbed in pleasure, he was not indifferent to the concerns of the State of which he was the head. He was, moreover, jealous of the power that was exercised by his own servants, prone to be displeased, ready to believe evil of those in whose hands authority was placed. "Your Majesty," said the minister to his sovereign, "is extremely suspicious, jealous, susceptible to passing aversions, and to variable humours and inclinations."

This was true, but it was also true that Louis could appreciate the qualities of a great man, and subdue his own petulant jealousies and dislikes when he felt that such a course was for the interest of the kingdom. Not an able man himself, he was unshaken in his support of those who were fit to guide the State. Richelieu would soon have been driven from power by the cabals of countless enemies if he had not accomplished great things. The influence which France exerted in Europe under his rule, the strength of the administrative system which he created, the internal good order which he enforced,

LOUIS XIII.

were acceptable to the sovereign. Often, indeed, in moments of weakness, he promised the overthrow of the minister, but Richelieu's influence was always strong enough to turn Louis from such a purpose. The King's mother, wife, and brother, the women whom he regarded with affection, the courtiers whom he viewed with favour, the confessors to whom he confided the secrets of his soul, all united in desiring the overthrow of the imperious Cardinal, and Louis had for him no feeling of personal liking; and yet during nineteen years they were unable to procure from the King the dismissal of his minister. Priests denounced him as a faithless son of the Church who espoused the cause of heretical princes; courtiers declaimed against the man who sought to humble a proud nobility and sent members of the noblest French families to the block; women prayed to be delivered from this cold and merciless tyrant, but the King was faithful to him to the end. It showed the power which a strong nature could exercise upon a weaker one, and it showed also the untiring attention with which the minister watched the foibles and the weaknesses of his master. If he was resolved to exercise an absolute control, he had the art to conceal it. He constantly consulted with the King; he declared himself to be only the King's shadow, the exponent of his desires, the executor of his purposes. He did not even neglect the matter of keeping his master constantly in view. Where the King was, there was the servant; if Louis went to war, Richelieu attended him; if he went from one palace or hunting-lodge to another in search of

pleasure, the minister followed also. Louis's character was not altogether a weak one, but it had its limitations. If Richelieu had ever left the King for six months, surrounded by his enemies, without himself being present to reply to them, his disgrace would have been certain, but he was never guilty of such carelessness.

CHAPTER IV

THE OVERTHROW OF THE HUGUENOT PARTY

1624–1629

THE problems which confronted the new minister were many and serious, and he has fairly stated them in the testament in which he reviewed the results of his long administration.

"When your Majesty called me to your councils, I can truly say that the Huguenots divided the State with you; the nobles conducted themselves as if they were not subjects, and the governors of provinces as if they were independent sovereigns. Foreign alliances were despised, private interests preferred to public, and the dignity of your Majesty so abased it could hardly be recognised. I promised your Majesty to use all my industry and power to ruin the Huguenot party, lower the pride of the nobles, lead all subjects to their duty, and restore the country's name among foreign nations."

He could justly claim that his promise was fully executed.

While the Queen-mother did much to hasten Richelieu's promotion, an influential coterie had

also been zealous in advancing his interests. It is doubtful if they would have been as ardent, could they have foreseen the Cardinal's career, for his advocates were for the most part bitter Catholics, who thought that in Richelieu they had found the man fitted by his talents and his beliefs to become their leader. Not only the position of the Huguenots in France, but the religious antagonisms out of which the Thirty Years' War had grown, tended to consolidate a strong Catholic party, resolved to defend the Church from what they regarded as the growing encroachments of Protestantism. It was natural that they should look upon Richelieu as their champion. He was an earnest Catholic, he was a bishop, a cardinal, a prince of the Church. If he were not in perfect sympathy with all his followers, he was not the man to discourage their zeal for his advancement by any injudicious expression of dissent from their views. In truth, his sympathies were with Catholicism, but in him the priest was always second to the politician. When he had attained to power, his first object was to increase the influence of France at the expense of Spain and Austria; they were Catholic powers, and Richelieu naturally found himself in alliance with Protestant states. Many of his early adherents would have sacrificed political schemes that involved co-operation with heretics, but Richelieu disregarded their advice, disappointed their hopes, and in time became to them an object of execration.

It was soon apparent that the Cardinal was to prove neither a friend of Spain nor a devoted son of

the Church. The Spanish were involved in a quarrel with the Grisons, a Protestant confederacy of Switzerland. Hardly had Richelieu assumed power, when he not only took the Grisons under his protection, but he summarily chased away the papal troops, to whom had been assigned the possession of some fortresses in the Valtelline. The war was brief, and Richelieu, having seen fit to espouse the cause of the Grisons, soon saw fit to abandon it, and made terms with Spain without consultation with his allies.

It is not just to charge the minister with bad faith in this matter, though such charges were freely made by those whose quarrels had been espoused by France and who found themselves deserted by their ally. Richelieu saw clearly that it was impossible for France to take an active part in foreign politics, or hold a commanding position in Europe, until the Government was free from internal disorder. Even during the brief campaign in the Valtelline, some of the Huguenot cities were in insurrection, and sought the assistance of England in a contest with their own sovereign. Richelieu's interference in European politics was for the most part in behalf of Protestant states, not indeed from any sympathy with their faith, but from jealousy of the great Catholic powers. It was discouraging when such a policy was hampered by the unruliness of French Protestants, and the minister resolved to quell rebellion at home before he again undertook war abroad. In truth, the position of the Huguenots was incompatible with a strong Government;

it rendered it impossible for France to exert her full strength; it left the State crippled by the constant recurrence of internal disturbance. It was Richelieu's firm resolve that the anarchy of misrule should be succeeded by the order of a vigorous Government, that he would have peace at home, that the soil of France should not be devastated by civil war, and that both prince and Protestant should in the future yield an unhesitating obedience to the commands of the central authority.

Of the problems he had to meet, none was more serious than the proper treatment of the Huguenot party. During the sixteenth century, dissent from the Catholic Church had spread in France with the same rapidity as in many parts of Europe. It was in the southern portions of the kingdom that the reformed faith made the greatest progress. Whether the tendency to new doctrines which had developed in the former dominions of the counts of Toulouse still remained in the population of Southern France, whether dissent found a soil prepared for it in the descendants of Albigenses and Troubadours, and flourished among the sunny fields and olive trees of Languedoc and Provence, the adherents of the new creed in many districts were in the majority. Dissent existed in the north as well as in the south, but in the northern provinces the bulk of the population was Catholic.

Though the great majority of the French people remained constant to their traditional faith, the House of Navarre was Protestant, and the accession of Henry IV. to the throne excited in the Protestant

party the hope that it might become the dominant power in the State. That judicious monarch preferred peace and an unquestioned title to the tenets of any theological system, and his renunciation of Calvinism discouraged the ambitious hopes of his followers.

An element of large importance in the growth of Protestantism in France had been the extent to which the nobility abandoned the ancient creed. It was probably political ambition rather than any deep study of the Fathers that accounted for their change of belief. There was not indeed in France the opportunity to appropriate lands of the Church which led German princes into the paths of heresy, but many a French noble, disappointed in his hopes and discontented with the Court, rallied to the support of a new party that furnished not only theological truth, but opportunities for turbulence.

The accession of these noble allies was originally a source of strength, but in time it became an element of weakness. Such leaders were ready to draw the Protestants into insurrections which had no motive but their own ambition, and the Huguenot party became an unruly political organisation. During the wars of religion they were banded together for the defence of their lives and their religion, but they clung to the measures that had been necessary for their protection in the days of the League and the Guises, when the necessity for them no longer existed. Though Henry IV. abjured the creed of his youth, he was not unmindful of his faithful followers: by the Edict of Nantes he secured for them

the exercise of their religion in those parts of France in which it was actually established; they were allowed to worship God and pursue their avocations without unreasonable hindrance. With this, the Huguenots might well have been content, and by a discreet conduct they might possibly have averted the persecutions which they suffered under Louis XIV. and his successors.

The Edict of Nantes was confirmed after Henry's death, and its provisions were carried out with reasonable good faith. Such a measure of toleration from a dominant creed was rare in those days. In England, a Catholic could observe the usages of his faith only in secret and in peril of his life; in almost every part of Europe, whether Catholic or Protestant, it was required that the religion of the King should be the religion of his subjects. Nor had the principles of toleration as yet entered deeply into the French mind; if the Edict of Nantes was respected as a necessity, it was not viewed with favour by most Catholics. The Huguenots were at times subjected to the annoyances that are inevitable when a minority practises a faith that is distasteful to the majority of the population. The rights secured by the Edict were grudgingly accorded; a zealous priest would sometimes seek to convert Huguenot heretics by questionable methods; a fanatical mob would sometimes disturb Huguenot rites by open violence. Yet there was no effort to revoke the Edict, and no interference on the part of the Government with the rights which it secured.

But the conduct of the Huguenots was not such

as to obtain the favour of a Government which, at best, looked upon them with suspicion. They had long been in possession of a considerable number of fortified towns, mostly in Southern France; by the Edict these were left in their charge, and they were also allowed, with the permission of the King, to continue the synods and assemblies in which they had been wont to discuss affairs of both Church and State. In the years following the death of Henry IV., the Protestants held several of those assemblies, usually without the permission of the Government, and they preserved and sought to perfect their military and political organisation. The territory, in which they were strong, was divided into circles, the command of each of which was given to some powerful noble, and preparations were made for levying and equipping troops, and for raising money to carry on war in case of need. Naturally the aid of such an organisation was sought by anyone in insurrection against the Government; their assistance was solicited by Condé and by the Queen-mother in their troubles, and the Huguenots showed a readiness to take part in quarrels in which the defence of their faith was in no wise involved.

It was impossible that the existence of a great religious party, holding its separate councils, in which not only questions of theology were discussed, the principles of Calvin and the iniquities of the papacy, but in which matters of state were considered, preparations made for war, and armies levied, should fail to excite the jealousy and ill-will of any Government. If this was not a state within a state,

it was something very like it, and it was certain that when a man like Richelieu was at the helm, either the Protestants must secure a practical independence by force, or accept their lot with other citizens, be subject to the same laws, and surrender any pretence of a separate political organisation.

The Huguenots had several times taken up arms since the death of Henry IV., usually, though not always, on the plea of some violated privilege. They wished to worship God according to their own conscience, but they wished also to preserve their political position, to hold their cities of defence, to be able to raise and equip armies, and to declare war if they deemed it expedient. Even if entire freedom of conscience were cheerfully granted, the existence of a powerful and unruly element was distasteful to all who believed that a strong Government was required for the development of the State, and it was inconsistent with the conceptions that were the basis of Richelieu's policy.

In the later years of Luines's rule, the King was at war with his Protestant subjects, a war brought on in part by Luines's maladroit bigotry, in part by the readiness of the Huguenots to accept a quarrel and leave it to the issue of arms. When Richelieu became prime minister, it was soon evident that his policy was not to be governed by considerations of religion; he allied himself with Protestant cantons, he expelled the papal troops, and made war upon Spain. He did not expect to be embarrassed by the Huguenots when he was carrying on war in defence of their religious brethren. Yet hardly had

Richelieu resolved to interfere in behalf of the Grisons, when some of the Huguenot leaders were again in revolt, and their action was supported by the city of La Rochelle, the stronghold of the Huguenot party. They were most ill-advised in choosing this time for stirring up insurrection. Richelieu was convinced, and justly convinced, that France could not hold a position of leadership in European politics until internal tranquillity was assured; he could not carry on war with Spain and Germany when it was possible that his troops might, at any time, be withdrawn to enforce order in Languedoc and Provence. He patched up a hasty peace both with Spain and with the Huguenots, but it needed no prophet to see that the so-called peace was only a temporary truce. The Cardinal declared that it was necessary to wait the time when he could reduce the Huguenots to the obedience in which all subjects of the King should dwell. The opportunity was not long deferred. It was early in 1626 that articles of pacification were signed between the King and the people of La Rochelle. In the following year, the great struggle began in which the political power of the Huguenots in France was for ever overthrown.

The terms of peace to which Richelieu consented were distasteful to all parties. The Cardinal was resolved to destroy the military power of the Huguenot party, and reluctantly postponed the effort. On the other hand, the Protestants had many grievances: the people of La Rochelle demanded the demolition of the strong fortress of St. Louis, which

was a perpetual menace to their town; the inhabitants of Béarn bore with impatience the presence of Catholic priests, which, though secured by the Edict of Nantes, had only recently been enforced by the Government; the dismantling of many fortified towns was a source of bitterness to eager religionists who believed that the safety of their faith could only be secured by practical independence of a Catholic sovereign. Between the Government and the Huguenot party there was an irrepressible conflict, but the final struggle was precipitated by the weak ambition of a trifler.

In 1624, Charles I. married Henrietta of France, a sister of Louis XIII. The French hoped that this alliance would not only promote amity between their country and England, but would secure some indulgence for persecuted Catholics. In both anticipations they were disappointed. The alliance was followed by constant bickerings over the non-observance of some of the conditions of the marriage contract. The French complained that the servants of Henrietta were dismissed, that she was harshly treated, and that the lot of the English Catholics became worse instead of better. The English replied that the French had failed to perform the conditions of the marriage agreement, that the Huguenots were ill-treated, and that Richelieu's foreign policy was tricky and deceitful.

The Duke of Buckingham was then at the height of his favour, and he had been sent to Paris to receive the French bride in his master's behalf. In a Court accustomed to magnificent display, Bucking-

ham excited attention by the gorgeousness of his dress, the charm of his manner, and the prodigality with which he threw away his money. The gossips declared that this handsome cavalier aroused a strong interest in the French Queen, Anne of Austria, and he was vain and indiscreet enough to complicate the relations of the two countries by a gallantry that was distasteful to the French King. Anne wasted no love on her husband, who not only wasted no love on her, but was singularly unfitted to excite affection even if he had desired it. Doubtless she was pleased by Buckingham's devotion, and this was quite enough to make it displeasing to the King and the Cardinal. When Buckingham again wished to visit Paris, he was informed that he would be a *persona non grata.* The Duke did not incite war merely to gratify a foolish pique, though unquestionably this had some influence on his action. But the relations between the two powers were fast drifting into open war: English cruisers under various pretexts seized French ships and made prizes of them; the English King complained of the treatment the Huguenots received from Louis, and charged the French King with failing to keep his promises. Buckingham knew that a war in behalf of their French co-religionists would be popular among the English; he hoped to gain for himself the glory of defeating England's traditional enemies, and, in July, 1627, at the head of a large fleet, he sailed to La Rochelle.

The avowed motives of this expedition were to procure for the Huguenots the rights to which they

were entitled, and to secure for the people of La Rochelle the destruction of the fortress of St. Louis, which they had long demanded. The English at once effected a landing on the island of Ré, which lay outside the harbour of La Rochelle, and began the siege of the fort of St. Martin. If Buckingham had conducted his campaign with vigour and intelligence, he could speedily have captured the fort and obtained entire possession of the island. He could then have kept up communications with La Rochelle on the mainland, and it would have been almost impossible for the French to drive him from his position, or force the city to surrender. But a contest in which Buckingham and Richelieu were the respective leaders was a very unequal one. No sooner was it known that the English had effected a landing than the Cardinal showed what could be accomplished by indomitable resolution. While the English proceeded leisurely with the siege, all was activity on the part of the French. Louis was sick, and they hesitated to inform him of this unexpected declaration of war, lest anxiety should aggravate his malady. But the real king did not wait for the recovery of the nominal King: he at once collected an army and sent it to the relief of the French besieged in St. Martin; he gathered supplies, and offered great rewards to those who would convey them to the fort; he pledged his own money and credit to those who were unwilling to trust the slow and uncertain payment that often awaited the creditors of the State.

When Richelieu assumed power, there was no

French navy in existence. He had borrowed the ships of England and of Holland in the early struggles in which he was engaged; he now sought the assistance of the Dutch and Spanish in his conflict with England. But the Dutch were loath to give any assistance in a contest that was really waged against their Protestant brethren in France. The Spanish had indeed no sympathy with heresy, but their hatred of heretics was much weaker than their jealousy of the French. They sent a fleet to La Rochelle, nominally to assist their French allies. The Marquis of Spinosa visited the French camp and was received with great honours, but all this amounted to nothing, and the Spanish fleet presently sailed back to Spain, leaving Louis to subdue his Huguenot rebels as best he could. "They have," said Richelieu, in his rage, "God and the Virgin in their mouths, their beads in their hands, but only their own temporal interests in their hearts."

Practically the English were in command of the sea, and they kept so close a watch over Fort St. Martin that Buckingham boasted that only the birds of heaven could reach it. The boast was not verified. "God willed the matter otherwise," the Cardinal piously remarked, but he might have attributed the result to his own exertions.

The English ships watched the Channel, and they also erected a barricade, which it was hoped would prevent the passage of any boats coming to the relief of the besieged. These precautions were in vain; the Cardinal inspired the French soldiers with his own zeal, and the hope of wealth, as well

as feelings of patriotism, urged them to action; he offered ten thousand crowns to anyone who would convey to the garrison provisions for two months; divers who made their way from the fort to the mainland were pensioned, and the leaders of relief expeditions were rewarded with unprecedented liberality. The coast was a dangerous one, and the autumnal storms furnished opportunities for evading the vigilance of the English to those who were willing to risk their lives in the hope of gain. The commander at St. Martin sent word that in a few days starvation would compel him to surrender, but on a stormy night in September a number of pinnaces, laden with supplies, made their way through the English ships and brought temporary relief. A little later a larger force with reinforcements and abundant supplies started for the fort. With his usual fondness for ecclesiastical warriors, Richelieu had sent the Bishop of Mende to superintend the preparations; mass was said, and the little boats set sail with the Episcopal benediction. Thus fortified, they succeeded in reaching their destination with small loss. The fort was now amply supplied. The besieged hung over the ramparts bottles of wine, hams, capons, and other articles of food, to show the good cheer that prevailed within.

Buckingham had put his reliance on starving out the French, and he now found himself in a more needy situation than they. Ré was a barren island, and a prudent general would have seized the neighbouring island of Oléron, where abundant supplies

could have been obtained. But this had been neglected until Richelieu had strengthened the garrison, and they were instructed, if driven out, not only to lay the island waste, but to poison the wells, that the English might derive no advantage from its possession. Buckingham now attempted to carry St. Martin's by storm, but he was not successful, and on the 17th of November he ignominiously abandoned his undertaking and set sail for England. Of the eight thousand men he had brought with him, only twelve hundred were left besides the sick and wounded. "The King," said Richelieu, triumphantly, "saw his enemies fly in shame before him to hide themselves in the caverns of their island."

Buckingham's unfortunate expedition had involved the Huguenot party in war with the Government. The people of La Rochelle had at first hesitated about forming an alliance with the English; staunch as was their Protestantism, they were equally staunch in their patriotism. But ambitious leaders urged that this was the last opportunity for deliverance; they decided to join forces with those who professed to come to their aid, and in this decision they were followed by the entire Protestant party of France.

Richelieu resolved, therefore, to lay siege to the city and by its capture to overthrow, once for all, the Protestant party as an element in French politics. The difficulties of the undertaking were great, and he did not disguise them from his master, but he advised him that now was an opportunity, which

might never return, to destroy the stronghold of Protestantism in France.

La Rochelle was a place of importance from its size as well as its strength. It boasted a population of between thirty and forty thousand, at a time when few French cities contained fifty thousand people. It had acquired commercial importance from the possession of a large and safe harbour, and its citizens were largely sailors and fishermen,—in the past often pirates and privateers,—and reputed the best mariners in France, bold, hardy, and resolute. They had long been intensely Protestant in their faith. Refusing to others the toleration they demanded for themselves, the Rochellois would allow no Catholic service in their city; no idolatrous mass corrupted the pure air of the town.

They enjoyed special political as well as religious privileges, which were dear to a hardy and an unruly people, and offensive to the centralising tendencies of Richelieu. For five hundred years La Rochelle had been a walled town, and the services of its people against the English had been rewarded by promises that no *taille* or impost should be levied on them without their consent. The French kingdom, formed by conquest, bargain, and inheritance, was imperfectly welded together, but La Rochelle was singularly free from the control of the central Government. Its citizens were not bound to serve in the royal army except when the safety of their city required; they chose their own municipal officers; their mayor was vested with a great authority which had been secured, so the people of La

Rochelle boasted, by a grant from Queen Eleanor in 1199; no local representative of the King dwelt among them; no garrison could be stationed in the town. When they wished to begin a revolt, they had only to lock the gates of their city; there were neither troops nor servants of the King to expel.

The practical independence asserted by the Rochellois was supported by the great strength of the place. All around it stretched vast morasses, traversed only by narrow causeways. It was impossible for an enemy to approach the city except over narrow roads, where an army could be repelled by a small body of resolute men. The town itself was surrounded by massive fortifications; great bastions at the corners completed the works, and the pious inhabitants had given them names which indicated their religious confidence. The Bastion of the Gospel was of special strength, and its defenders could well hope that the Lord would never suffer it to be beaten down. There was little danger from the sea, for the marine of the city was considerable in numbers, and the French King had no ships of war of which they need be afraid.

As the great nobles deserted the Protestant faith, the city of La Rochelle steadily assumed a more important place in the councils of the party, and for many years its representatives had exerted a great and almost a controlling influence on its deliberations. This strongly fortified city, with its hardy and resolute population, inspired courage in those of the reformed faith; its overthrow would

not only discourage the hopes but to a large extent destroy the organisation of the Huguenot party.

For this great enterprise Richelieu summoned every resource which his energy could command. In so pious an undertaking, he demanded the assistance of spiritual as well as of earthly weapons. The clergy were asked for contributions, the Pope was besought to regard this war as a crusade, to grant plenary indulgence to all who took part in it, and even to those who would contribute to the cause so little as twenty sous; and in addition to these spiritual rewards, he was asked to grant them permission to eat cheese and eggs during Lent. To this request the Pope declined to accede, lest he should lessen the devotion which French Catholics showed in their Lenten observances; but plenary indulgence was accorded to those who would serve in the war, and the Church contributed liberally towards the expense.

An army of twenty-five thousand men was soon gathered around the devoted city, and of it the Cardinal, in fact, though not in name, was commander-in-chief. He was by no means the only ecclesiastic in the service: he had bishops as generals and friars as emissaries and lieutenants, and all this religious soldiery reported to the priest who was the general-in-chief. The commander, in the red hat of a cardinal, was surrounded by a staff in mitre and frock. No soldiers bred to the trade were more zealous than these religious warriors; the Bishop of Mende died during the siege, and his last request to his associates was that they should bury his

remains in La Rochelle. The Cardinal imposed a discipline rare in those days: no marauding was allowed, the soldiers were regularly paid, and in turn were allowed no license. The camp, said the Cardinal, was like a well-ordered convent, and the host of ecclesiastics who fought and catechised in turn added force to his metaphor.

It was with good reason that Richelieu was zealous in the siege, for his own fate, as well as that of the Protestant party in France, was involved in the result. The power which he held, and the vigour with which he exercised it, had already excited many enemies, and among them those who were nearest to the King. Louis's wife had always disliked Richelieu, and with good reason, for he had shown her small consideration and was jealous of any influence she might exert over the King. It was not at all likely that Louis would ever be in any way influenced by his wife, for whom he had small regard, but his mother was a more dangerous enemy.

To the steadfast favour of Mary de' Medici Richelieu owed his elevation, but this amity was fast turning into enmity; the Queen-mother had anticipated a large share in the Government of which her favourite would be the nominal head; she soon found that Richelieu had no thought of dividing authority with anyone. As the siege slowly progressed, Louis wearied of its monotony and wished to return to Paris. The Cardinal was loath to give his consent, but he feared to incur the King's ill humour by advising him to stay. Accordingly, Louis left the camp, and at Paris he was surrounded by those who

sought to make life agreeable to him, and to intimate that it would be much more agreeable if he would rid himself of his imperious minister. If the siege had resulted in failure it is not likely that Richelieu would have retained his place,—he needed a record of success to which he could appeal. Louis was by no means indifferent to glory, and when the minister could point to great achievements, he need not fear the attacks of his enemies.

If La Rochelle were taken, and the Huguenot party forced to yield implicit obedience to the King, the position of the minister would be so strong that he could look with indifference at the ill-will and hostile criticism of Louis's relatives, favourites, courtiers, and confessors. "I think we shall be foolish enough to take La Rochelle," said an officer who did not love the Cardinal; and his prophecy was verified.

In spite of the size of the army camped around the city, no serious attempt was made to capture it by storm. With the implements of warfare that then existed, a town so strongly situated and so strongly fortified was practically impregnable. Richelieu could only trust to the slow progress of famine by which to overcome the heroic obstinacy of the Rochellois, and his efforts were turned to instituting so strict a blockade that no provisions could reach the besieged.

It was comparatively easy to prevent the entry of provisions into La Rochelle by land, but to cut off their supplies by water was a far more difficult task. However, the departure of Buckingham left them

dependent upon their own ships to keep the harbour open. By chartering boats in every part of France, Richelieu gathered a considerable naval force, and with its assistance he resolved to close the harbour by the construction of a great dike that would prevent the passage of ships of any size. The undertaking was one of enormous difficulty. The sea in this region was a stormy one at best, and the work was to be done in winter, when high winds frequently endangered the lives of the labourers and threatened to sweep away all they had accomplished. But no difficulties discouraged the Cardinal; he soon had a great force working in the water, engaged on the construction of the dike, and he stimulated them by promises of high pay. The men were paid so much for each basketful of material which they delivered, and the rate was so liberal that a diligent man could earn twenty sous a day, more than double the ordinary wages of a labourer.

The people of the city did what they could to interfere with the progress of the work, but their trust was more in the elements than in their own strength. On the 10th of January, so furious a storm raged that a considerable part of the dike was carried away, but such obstacles hindered without preventing its completion. Week after week, in defiance of storm and cold and stress of weather, the work went on, and at last, by March, 1628, the harbour was practically closed. The dike was almost a mile in length, constructed of great stones, some of which can still be seen; the opening at the centre was guarded by a floating stockade, and was

vigilantly watched. The people of La Rochelle had asked Buckingham to furnish them with sufficient supplies, but he had neglected to do so. As communication with the city became difficult and at last almost impossible, and the months went slowly on, the supply of food became more and more scanty. Still there was no thought of surrender. The mayor of the city was one Jean Guiton, a hardy and resolute mariner. When elected to the office, he had laid his dagger upon the table and said that was for the person who should first suggest surrender. Nor were the women any less resolute than the men. The Duchess of Rohan was in the city, a woman well over seventy, and living on starvation fare like those of humbler rank. She was active in the councils of the town and her voice was against any surrender; they sought, so she wrote her son, complete victory or an honourable death; and at the end of a year's siege, those who were left alive were still hoping that the Lord would deliver his own.

It was idle to expect that the other French Protestants could successfully attack the great army Richelieu had collected, but Charles I., it was thought, would not desert those in whose behalf he had taken up arms. In May, 1628, an English fleet of one hundred sail appeared in the bay, under the command of Buckingham's brother-in-law, the Earl of Denbigh. The starving citizens thought that relief was now near at hand, but their joy was brief. Though the French were far inferior in the number and quality of their ships, they were protected by batteries on land, and back of them lay the dike,

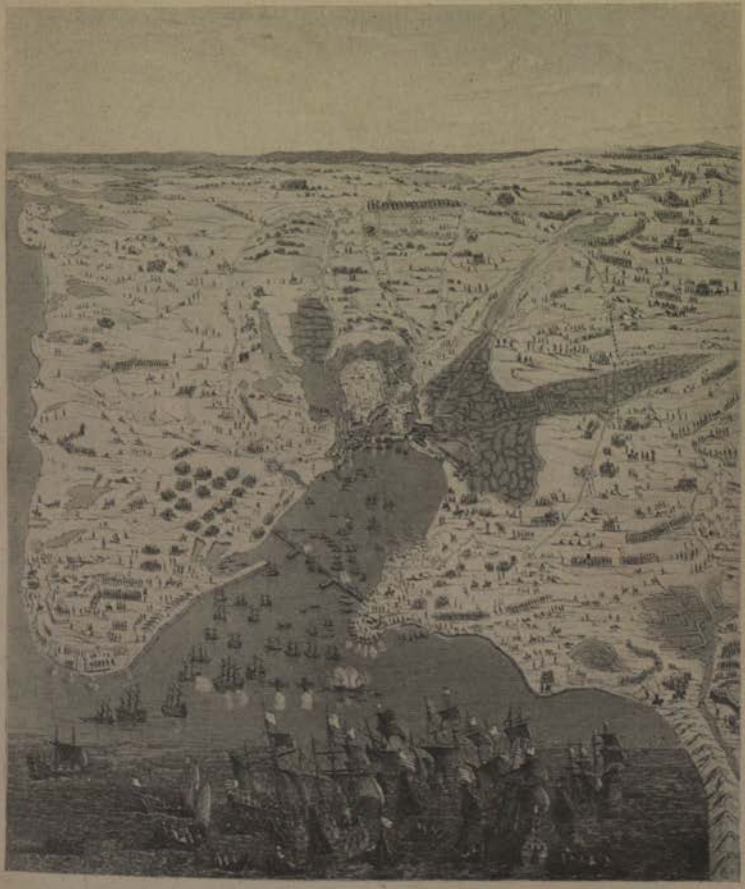
through which a passage must be forced. The English commander surveyed the situation, decided that it was hopeless, and, almost without firing a gun, he sailed away home.

As the summer progressed and the besieged were living on rats and boiled skins, some advocated surrender as the only escape from starvation. They were so reduced in numbers and strength that an assaulting party would have met with little but the wall itself to check their way. Some of the old men and women and children had asked to be allowed to pass the French lines, but they were pitilessly driven back; the authorities of the town were unwilling to feed these useless mouths, and many of them, overcome by hunger and exhaustion, died between the lines. But the mayor was still inexorable. "While a man remains to keep the gate closed, it is enough," he said. "I will decide by lot with anyone which of us shall be killed to feed the survivor."

Charles had pledged his royal word that he would relieve the people of La Rochelle, and their deputies now earnestly demanded further aid. The King was ready to grant it, and Buckingham himself was preparing to lead a new expedition when he was murdered by Felton. The assassin had served as an officer in the first expedition to Ré; he had been disappointed in obtaining promotion or getting his pay, and his rancour against the favourite began with that ill-fated undertaking. And so Buckingham himself fell a victim of the unwise war which he had incited.

Preparations were continued notwithstanding Buckingham's assassination, and, late in September, a powerful fleet of 140 ships, carrying six thousand soldiers, slowly sailed up to the entrance of the harbour. The French were in readiness to meet them. Louis had returned to the army, and Richelieu and the King watched from the shore the final effort to raise the long siege, while, with still greater anxiety, the people of the city gazed from the ramparts at a contest in which were involved their civic independence, their religious privileges, and perhaps their lives. Victory was again on Richelieu's side, and once again the hopes of the heroic defenders of the town were disappointed. The English made some effort to force their way into the harbour, but they were not successful. After two days of desultory fighting a storm arose and drove them back, and they sailed away to England.

Any expectation of relief had now disappeared, and famine had done its perfect work. The people of the city had long been reduced to the last extremities of hunger, and subsisted on the vilest food. When horse- and dog-meat were gone, they sought nourishment from leather straps, from boots and sword belts, boiled into nauseous messes with the scanty greens they could raise within the fortifications. Only 150 men were in fit condition to do military service; the population of the town was diminished by half — fifteen thousand people had perished from disease and starvation. The unburied dead lay scattered about the streets of the city as the deputies at last started for the royal camp



THE CAPTURE OF LA ROCHELLE.

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY CHAVANE, FROM CONTEMPORARY SOURCES.

to proffer their submission. Even then, they asked for terms of surrender which would secure the rights and privileges of the city and the interests of the Huguenot party. But the time was past for conditions and terms of peace; the Cardinal said that all that was left for them was to submit to the King's grace and hope for his mercy.

On October 28, 1628, after a siege of fifteen months, La Rochelle surrendered. The citizens were promised security for their lives and property and the free exercise of their religion, but the power and independence of the city were forever gone. Its privileges were forfeited, the fortifications were destroyed, no Protestant could thereafter take up his residence in the city, its municipal government was done away with, and it was placed under the orders of officers of the King. What was perhaps most distressing to its people, the full and free practice of the Catholic religion was allowed within its boundaries.

On All Saints' Day, the 1st of November, 1628, the King made his solemn entry into the city. The Cardinal met him at the gate and handed him the keys of the town, and he then celebrated mass at the church of St. Marguerite. A long procession of Capuchins marched through the streets, singing the *Te Deum* in honour of the restoration of La Rochelle to Catholicism. Six days later, a great storm carried away a large part of the dike, and the English fleet could easily have entered the town with reinforcements and supplies. Richelieu had done all in his power, and then Fortune favoured him, as she is wont to favour those who deserve her smiles.

The surrender of the city left the Cardinal free to proceed against the Huguenots in Southern France, but for a little while he was obliged to defer his plans because France was involved in an Italian war. The Duke of Nevers, a French nobleman, inherited the Italian duchy of Mantua. His rights were disputed by Spain and Savoy, and hostilities began during the siege of La Rochelle. No foreign complications could draw Richelieu from his determination to complete his conquest, and he grimly waited until the Rochellois had consumed their last boots and saddle-bags; but when they finally succumbed to starvation, Louis and Richelieu at once led an army of thirty thousand men to the support of the new Duke of Mantua. Their road to Italy was by the Pass of Susa; in the early spring the snow lay thick on the path, and it seemed almost impossible to dislodge the forces of the Duke of Savoy. But the French attacked them with great valour, and Louis XIII. on this occasion, as always in life, showed himself a good and courageous soldier.

When the French had forced their way into Italy, the war was practically ended, and Louis returned to France, leaving Richelieu in command. The Cardinal found more enjoyment in the pursuit of arms than in saying mass, and he was always pleased to pose as a soldier instead of a priest. A witness has described his appearance at a conference with the Duke of Savoy. He was equipped in a cuirass and full military dress, with a white plume floating from his hat, a sword by his side, and two pistols resting

at the pommel of his saddle, and in this warlike attire he rode at the head of his forces on a spirited steed, showing manifest pleasure in exhibiting his skill as a horseman.

Whether he appeared in the robes of a cardinal or in the garb of a general, he always brought his enemies to terms; Spain and Savoy soon agreed upon a treaty by which the rights of the Duke of Mantua were secured, and the Cardinal was at last free to complete the work which the capture of La Rochelle had rendered easy. The Duke of Rohan commanded the Protestant forces in Southern France; they had taken up arms in behalf of their brethren in La Rochelle, and had obtained promises of assistance both from Charles of England and Philip of Spain. It was not strange that Rohan found a friend in a Protestant king, but one would not have expected to see the grandson of Philip II. an ally of heretics. The piety of Philip IV. did not prevent his desiring the Protestant party to continue as a check on the power of his most Christian brother of France, and he promised Rohan pecuniary assistance, providing only that if the Protestants succeeded in forming a separate state, they would allow in it liberty of conscience for Catholics.

It was not fated that a Huguenot state should be carved out of the French kingdom. Rohan's Protestant ally and his Catholic ally deserted him with the same facility, and alone he could not resist the forces of the French monarchy directed by the vigour of Richelieu. In the summer of 1629, the Huguenots submitted to their fate. The King

no longer made a treaty with the Protestant party as with a foreign power; he received their submission as conquered rebels. They were required to surrender all their fortified cities, and their existence as a political party was terminated. Richelieu himself superintended the destruction of the fortifications of no less than twenty of the thirty-eight walled towns, which the Protestants had held a few years before.

The exercise of their religion was secured to Catholics in the places in which it had been forbidden. "The ark beat down the temple of Dagon," said Richelieu, "and God entered in triumph the places from which His worship had been sacrilegiously banished." The Cardinal established numerous Jesuit and Capuchin missions in Protestant towns, and reopened and embellished churches which had long been closed. His qualities as a statesman did not prevent his being a strong and, at times, a bitter Catholic. He has related the conversion of a Protestant town with a satisfaction that we would have expected in Louis XIV., but which seems strange in Richelieu.

"I cannot forget," he writes, "the goodness of God in the conversion of all the people of the city of Aubenas. The Seigneur d'Ornano had the arms of the Huguenots conveyed to the château, and lodged his soldiers, who were in the city, with the Huguenots, exempting the Catholics. At once, fifteen or twenty were converted and abjured their heresy; they were soon followed by a greater number, until, finally, two hundred and fifty families were converted in less than three weeks."

Any question as to the means by which a heretic is brought to make even outward profession of the true faith is very modern. Some were brought to see the truth by fear and some by favour. A fund was raised for those who would abjure their errors, and the pay was liberal when the convert was a person of influence. The Marquis of La Caze, formerly a colonel in the Huguenot service, promised to become a Catholic and to use his influence to secure the conversion of others if satisfactory terms could be made. "I hope to hear his confession," wrote Father Athanasius to Richelieu, "as soon as you return to me the enclosed memorandum. I have fixed the Marquis's pension at six thousand livres."

A number of the ministers were secretly suborned, and Richelieu and Father Joseph planned a conference of Catholic and Huguenot clergy, where, after a discussion of matters of faith, the latter would acknowledge the truth of Catholicism and carry their Huguenot followers *en masse* into the true Church. Father Joseph sent a list of thirty-one Huguenot ministers in Languedoc alone, the promise of whose aid he had obtained for this project, but it came to nothing; the conference was never held, and Richelieu did not obtain the glory of bringing to the fold all those who had wandered from it. Probably such a project excited more confidence in the Capuchin than in the Cardinal, and while Richelieu would gladly have been a converter, he was unwilling to become a persecutor.

Some Huguenots, stubborn in their resistance, were hanged or sent to the galleys; but Louis not

only granted free pardon to almost all—he chose the time when their strongholds were dismantled and their power overthrown to publish once again the Edict of Nantes, and solemnly reaffirm the religious privileges secured to them by Henry IV.

Richelieu was a Catholic, but he was a statesman first of all: he was resolved that the Protestants should yield unquestioned obedience to the King; he would have been glad if they had yielded a similar obedience to the Pope, but he had no thought of weakening France by driving from her borders loyal though heretical subjects. Within reasonable limits the Huguenots enjoyed not only protection but favour; Huguenot generals commanded armies under Richelieu, Huguenot diplomats were employed in his service, and all were left undisturbed in the peaceful observance of their faith.

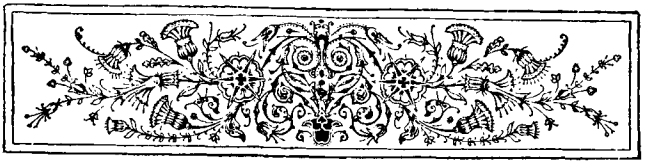
After the fall of La Rochelle and the loss of their fortified cities, the Protestant party ceased to exist as a separate organisation in the State; they were no longer sought by unruly noblemen as allies in some projected rebellion, they no longer raised troops or chose generals or endeavoured to treat as an independent power with the general Government; in modern phrase, they were out of politics, and they were much better for it. Almost fifty years of tranquil prosperity lay before the Huguenots; they cultivated their fields, sold their merchandise, and counted their gains in peace; undisturbed also, they worshipped God according to their own consciences, held their frequent meetings, sang inspiring psalms,

and listened to lengthy sermons. In return, the Protestants became loyal and faithful subjects, and they were not led astray during the disturbances of the Fronde. "The little flock," said Mazarin, "feeds on poisonous herbs, but it does not wander from the fold." France had no more useful or contented citizens than the Huguenots.

This condition, fortunate alike for them and for the country, was disturbed through the bigotry of Louis XIV. by a long era of persecution and by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The responsibility of these unwise and calamitous measures can in no wise be charged to the taking of La Rochelle, or to the overthrow of the Protestant military power under Richelieu. His policy was that of a wise statesman, beneficial alike to the Protestants and to the whole kingdom. It was impossible that a large body of people should continue in a state of armed independence, which must often result in actual war with the general Government. This power, inconsistent with the order and growth of the state, was overthrown by a statesman too wise to be led into the paths of persecution, who destroyed the means of disturbance without interfering with the rights of conscience.

But Louis XIV. inherited the bigotry of his Spanish ancestors; he was the descendant of Philip II., Spanish blood ran thick in his veins, and he was surrounded by those like unto himself. If the Protestants had still possessed their cities of defence, if La Rochelle had still been their stronghold, this would have been no protection against the power of

the French monarchy under Louis XIV. The fact that they had been insubordinate in the past was used against them by their enemies, when they had long been the most peaceful of French citizens; their past unruliness became the pretext for their ruin.



CHAPTER V

RICHELIEU AND HIS ENEMIES

1626–1637

RICHELIEU'S return from his victories over Savoy and the Huguenots was a triumphal progress, at which he was justly elated. At every city he was received with solemn state, the local parliaments sent deputations to congratulate him, mayors and city officials delivered to him addresses, the effusiveness of which redeemed their length; bishops called to felicitate one of their order who had become so great, the nobility thronged to pay their compliments, representatives of academies and universities used their most Ciceronian Latin as they sounded the Cardinal's praise. He modestly attributed his success to the blessing of God and the wisdom and valour of the King, whose intentions he had assisted in carrying into effect. But he was now, in the eyes of all the world, the foremost man in France; success left him free to carry out his designs, alike in the foreign relations and the internal development of the kingdom; it gave him an

influence with the King which his enemies could never overcome.

Yet his hold on power was far from being wholly assured. For nineteen years he was the King's chief minister, but during that long period, there was no time in which he felt certain of continued favour, or in which his enemies entirely despaired of securing his overthrow.

There was always a certain analogy between the relations of the Cardinal with the King and those of a pedagogue with his pupil, but in this case the pupil was fickle and wayward, and he had it in his power to dismiss the preceptor when the fancy seized him. Success in Italy and at La Rochelle strengthened the Cardinal's position, and he took the opportunity to lecture the King concerning his duties. This exhortation was prepared with special care, and Richelieu has preserved it for posterity. He tells us that it occupied an hour in delivery, and it may well have done so, for it fills thirty-four printed pages. The tone curiously resembles that of a somewhat exacting and querulous pedagogue, yet it was delivered by a subject to a king, and to a king who was a man almost thirty years of age. Louis heard many similar addresses, and if he did not listen patiently, at least he listened. The spectacle of the King, restlessly moving in his seat, while the minister instructed him as to his duties, and lectured him upon his defects, must have been a curious one. And the Cardinal certainly did not spare his listener's feelings; these lengthy sermons must have wearied any man, and would have irritated most men.

"The King is good and brave and virtuous," so his minister informs him, "but he is also suspicious and jealous, subject to whims and humours, which it would be easier for him to correct than for me to point out, being so accustomed to publish his virtues to the world that I can with difficulty indicate his defects, even to himself."

Notwithstanding this difficulty, the Cardinal succeeded in pointing out an abundant supply of deficiencies. Many thought, so the minister informed Louis, that he paid so little heed to services rendered, that at the end of three days they were wholly forgotten. Moreover, the master was wont to speak ill of his faithful servants, and dwell on their defects. "His Majesty will please be careful to avoid this failing," said the minister. Then also he soon wearied of great questions, and dwelt by preference on trifles, giving the impression that the government of the State was a matter of indifference to him, and that he willingly left the decision of important matters to others.

"To avoid this," said the prudent minister, "if his Majesty desired, he could be so dexterously advised in secret, that everything done would seem to be by his own order. M. de Luines," Richelieu continued, "said that the King was more inclined to severity than to kindness, more ready to do an evil turn than to bestow a favour. I have never said so," added the Cardinal, "but unfortunately many believe it to be true."

In enumerating the King's defects, he did not forget a remedy that would cure many of them, for

he advised Louis to have a servant who would restrain the great nobles and act with authority in matters which the King, from his temperament, was sure to neglect, and he besought him not to cherish any foolish jealousy of the accomplishments of such a representative, for this was to be envious of his own shadow. By such curious exhortations, certainly not lacking in plain speaking, Richelieu sought to restrain the varying caprices of his master, and to allay his easily excited aversions. The effort was successful; whether because Louis admired his minister's achievements, or dreaded his homilies, he kept him in his service.

During the long years of the Cardinal's administration, plots for his overthrow and against his life were formed with varying frequency. At the root of most of these cabals was no deeper cause than a desire to be rid of the Cardinal and his followers, that others might share in the royal bounty or exercise authority in the State. It was not only his foreign policy, but his personal character that aroused an unlimited supply of enemies. Mary de' Medici desired Richelieu's ruin, because she hated him as an ingrate; the Cardinal's hand was laid heavily on the nobility, and they bore him no love; he was mistrusted by the clergy, who saw in him a priest ready to sacrifice the cause of the Church to the demands of the State. Amid all the enemies excited by jealousy, resentment, and disapproval of his policy, it is not strange that conspiracies for his overthrow were numerous.

Such intriguers had to deal with one who was a

master in their own art. If Richelieu was surrounded by plotters and caballers, no man was better fitted to discover their secrets and baffle their purposes. His own nature was subtle and secretive, he spared no pains and hesitated at no means to penetrate and to defeat the plans of his enemies. In his employ was always a large force of skilful spies, and those most trusted by his adversaries were often in the pay of the Cardinal. Ladies of rank and gentlemen of fashion, who in public declaimed against Richelieu's tyranny, sent secret reports for his information; even the priest at the confessional often advised his penitent as the minister directed.

The skill with which the Cardinal penetrated the purposes of his enemies was equalled by the severity with which he punished them. Richelieu was not a bloody-minded man, he was not cruel, but he was merciless. In early years, he had seen how lightly revolt was undertaken, when the punishment for it was also light. He was resolved that to take up arms against the King, or to plot against his minister, should be recognised as a most dangerous occupation, no matter how exalted the rank of those who participated in it.

He was not only a man cunning in intrigue and skilful in foiling the plots of his enemies, but he met them with a resolute courage that never flinched. Only the life of Louis XIII., an infirm man, always ill, often at death's door, stood between the Cardinal and utter ruin. Gaston, the King's brother, was the heir presumptive, a youth as weak and

cowardly and treacherous as could be found in France. He was allied with those who hated Richelieu with a deadly hatred; if Louis XIII. died, his minister would be fortunate to escape from his enemies with the loss of his office and the confiscation of his estate.

But he never swerved by a hair's breadth from the course he had marked out, in order to avoid these dangers. He ruled the kingdom as if he were beyond the possibility of overthrow, disregarding the advice of his adversaries, making no sacrifice of the State's interests to please a man who at any time might become his sovereign, or to conciliate those who controlled this weak and selfish youth.

The birth of a son to Louis XIII. many years later did not make Richelieu's position safer; if the King died while the child was a minor, the Queen would naturally become regent, and Louis's wife hated the minister as sincerely as did Louis's brother. There was something heroic in this infirm priest, holding office under an infirm master, unmoved in the performance of what he believed his duty to the State, and giving no heed to those who might any day be in position to visit upon him the accumulated hatred of years.

The record of all the plots for Richelieu's overthrow would fill volumes; some of them which illustrate not only the dangers of his career, but also the nature of the Government, deserve some notice in an account of his life.

In 1626, when Richelieu had been only two years in office, the first great combination was formed

GASTON, DUKE OF ORLEANS.

FROM A STEEL ENGRAVING.

against him. It had been decided to marry Gaston to Mlle. de Montpensier, and as she was young, beautiful, and the greatest heiress in France, he might have been content with his lot. But the marriage was distasteful to many of Gaston's followers, and they had little trouble in persuading him to refuse his consent. The surest way to defeat the project was to get rid of the minister who had formed it, and the intriguers devoted their energies to this end. It was, said Richelieu, the most frightful conspiracy recorded in history. Its gravity was perhaps exaggerated by the man against whom it was formed. The plotters decided that Gaston with some followers should visit the Cardinal at his country house, demand the release of a friend who had been imprisoned, and if this were refused the Cardinal should be murdered on the spot. The visit was made and the release demanded, but a few words of the Cardinal so alarmed Gaston that he at once beat a retreat. Richelieu soon put an end to these machinations; Marshal Ornano, Grand Prior Vendôme, an illegitimate son of Henry IV., and Chalais, Gaston's confidant and trusted adviser, were arrested, and the conspiracy fell to pieces. Gaston tremblingly told all he knew of their plans; he promised hereafter to live in perfect submission to the King, and to disclose to him any future plots or evil counsels that came to his knowledge, and he was married forthwith to Mlle. de Montpensier, the Cardinal himself tying the nuptial knot.

On the same day, Richelieu began the series of executions for political crimes, which were, perhaps,

necessary for the peace of the community but have cast a lurid light upon his name. Chalais was tried for treason by a special court created to condemn him, and was at once brought to the block. Gaston was playing cards when told of the execution of his favourite, and continued the game undisturbed. Ornano and Vendôme escaped the block by dying in prison. Richelieu's enemies declared that he caused them to be poisoned, but he never resorted to secret executions; he was not afraid to put his opponents to death before the eyes of all the world.

Richelieu's successes increased the zeal of those who sought his overthrow. As Louis returned from his Italian campaign in 1630, he fell ill at Lyons. His health was always infirm, and medical art did much to weaken a feeble constitution; almost every day had its drug, and almost every week its bleeding; in one year, it was said, the King was bled forty-seven times, and his physicians administered to him doses of medicine by the hundred. Notwithstanding all this, Louis dragged out a sickly existence for forty-two years. At Lyons he was dangerously ill; the physicians bled him seven times in one week, and then bade him consider his spiritual welfare. He received the viaticum, and, on September 30th, it was thought he could not survive the day. "This morning," wrote Richelieu, "I saw the greatest and most virtuous of kings in such a condition that I could not hope he would be alive by night." Everyone believed that Gaston would soon be king, and rumour declared that Anne of

Austria sent a messenger to him, suggesting the project of a marriage after Louis had passed away. Whether true or false, Louis believed the story, and this was added to the long list of his wife's offences.

Richelieu watched the progress of his master's illness with a more sincere desire for his recovery than was felt by most of the Court. If the King died, the minister's overthrow was certain ; he could only hope to escape death or imprisonment by retiring into obscurity. To the amazement of all, the King lived through all the bleedings and purgings to which he was subjected, and his health suddenly took a turn for the better. But he was still feeble, and his mother endeavoured to obtain from his weakness the promise of Richelieu's overthrow. The King disliked to say no even when well; and he obtained temporary respite from his mother's solicitations by vague promises to dismiss Richelieu after his return to Paris. In October, the royal party left Lyons, the Cardinal accompanying them, and in November they reached the capital.

The promises which Louis had given when ill, he felt no desire to perform when in health. His mother pressed him relentlessly, and on November 10th they had a long conference with closed doors, that she might have her son to herself and be free from the Cardinal's interference. But he suspected the subject of their interview, and finding access by a door leading from the chapel which had been overlooked, he suddenly appeared in their midst. " God furnished a door that had not been barred," he wrote twelve years later, " and this gave me an

opportunity to defend myself when it was sought to complete my ruin." At first Mary de' Medici was so appalled by his intrusion that she allowed him to proceed in his endeavour to justify himself, but she soon found her temper, which was occasionally violent, and her tongue, which was often virulent. She poured out her wrath on the Cardinal, and at last declared that the King must rid himself of one or the other. "In that case," said the Cardinal, meekly, "it would be reasonable that it should be of me."

Louis had been an embarrassed spectator of this scene, and was glad to make his escape by declaring that he wished to visit Versailles, but before he left, the Queen-mother obtained from him the appointment of Marillac as general of the army in Italy, and strong intimations that Marillac's brother, her chief adviser, should succeed Richelieu as prime minister. Greatly embarrassed as to what he should do, and little pleased with what he had done, the King moodily made his way to Versailles, accompanied only by a few of his most intimate retainers.

In the meantime, all was exultation among the friends of the Queen-mother, and they apportioned among themselves the power and the places which the Cardinal's overthrow would leave vacant. Marillac, the guard of the seals, was to become prime minister, his brother was to command the army in Italy, and the partisans of Richelieu were to be replaced by partisans of the Queen.

Thus those unwary politicians schemed and rejoiced on the day of November 11, 1630, which was

to become famous as the Day of the Dupes. It was reported that Richelieu himself despaired of the situation, and prepared to leave the Court. This does not seem probable; he was not a man to abandon the contest, and he knew the influence he could exert over Louis, even when the monarch was most eager to throw off his yoke. While Richelieu's enemies were exulting over his downfall, the political future of France was decided at an obscure hunting-lodge. Louis had fled to Versailles from his mother's importunities, and there sought relief in hunting, which of all earthly pleasures he liked best. The splendours of Versailles were far in the future; it was then a small lodge, surrounded by forests in which there was an abundance of deer, boar, and wolves.

The King was reluctant to disgrace his minister, not because he loved him, but because he knew that the success of his reign depended on the Cardinal's continuance in power. If Louis was unwilling to say no to the greedy intriguers and ambitious women who clamoured for the minister's overthrow, no one knew better than he how unfit was such a coterie to fill the minister's place; while he was glad to feel that the Cardinal's majestic presence would no longer overawe him, yet he was mortified that the control of the State should fall into unfit hands.

But this was not to be. It is said that Louis's favourite, Saint Simon, the father of the famous writer of memoirs, advised him to send for the Cardinal, and that the King was willing to listen to

his advice. At all events, Richelieu followed Louis to Versailles, and in an evening at the hunting-lodge he answered the arguments of his enemies and confounded their devices. The Queen-mother had committed a fatal mistake from over-confidence, and no one of her emissaries followed Louis to Versailles to guard against dangerous interviews. Before the conference was ended, Louis decided to retract his promises and to retain the Cardinal in power. A crowd of smiling ladies and exulting gentlemen were gathered about Mary de' Medici, when a messenger from the King announced that Louis had decided to dismiss Marillac from his position. The disgrace of her follower showed that the Queen's schemes had failed, and that Louis was again under Richelieu's control. "He has dealt ill with me," she said, "not only because I am his mother, but because he has failed to keep his word."

The Cardinal would have met no mercy in defeat, and he showed no mercy in victory. Marshal Marillac was arrested, tried for peculation, and condemned to death. "A man of my rank condemned for peculation!" said the marshal; "there was not offence enough to flog a lackey." He might have been pardoned for making the King pay two prices for oats and flour; such frauds were common, even among those of high degree, but there was no forgiveness for plotting against Richelieu. The marshal's brother, who was to replace Richelieu in the ministry designated by Mary de' Medici, was also arrested, and he escaped the block by dying in prison. Bassompierre, another great nobleman,

who had done little more than sympathise with the Cardinal's enemies, was arrested and confined in the Bastille for twelve years, until the minister's death brought him deliverance. Arrest without a charge, and imprisonment without a trial, were not uncommon in French political life; Richelieu in those respects was no more and no less an offender than kings and ministers before and after him.

Louis's mother and brother were the Cardinal's most dangerous enemies, and they could neither be beheaded nor shut up in prison. But by their own act they relieved him of their presence. Mary de' Medici went to Compiègne with the King and Cardinal. They made a hasty return to Paris, and from there the King sent his mother a letter, ordering her to retire to Moulins. "I will obey," she wrote in return, "and remain at Moulins until God, the protector of the innocent, shall touch your heart." Apparently, she decided that it was useless to wait for so remote a day, and, instead of going to Moulins, she presently fled to Brussels, and sought refuge with the Spanish army. She never again saw her son or his minister, and for eleven years she remained an exile, travelling from Court to Court, nursing vain hopes of revenge, and devising schemes for the Cardinal's ruin which always failed of accomplishment. Richelieu had many enemies, but no one hated him as the woman to whose favour he owed so much. It is strange that this sensual, indolent Italian, fond of the good things of life, loving luxury, disliking toil, should have nourished a hate so strong that it drove her from the pomp and splendour

of the Luxembourg, to suffer an exile's lot. She could have remained in France; both Richelieu and the King were well content to have her go, and uttered no wish for her return, but Louis would never have pronounced a decree of banishment against his mother. It was enmity to Richelieu that made her shake the dust of France off her feet. To her, his conduct seemed the basest ingratitude; she felt that he owed his rise to her favour, and was bound to share with her his power. It is possible that Richelieu had gained not only her good-will, but her affection, that not only the neglect of the politician but the forgetfulness of the lover made the Cardinal odious to Mary de' Medici. Considering the manner of woman she was, perhaps nothing else would have aroused in her so fierce and passionate a hate.

Cold as was Richelieu's nature, he was not insensible to the charge of ingratitude towards the author of his fortunes. In his will, prepared shortly before his death, there was but one political reference, and in that he wrote, "I must say that I have never failed in my duty to the Queen-mother, notwithstanding the calumnies that have been heaped upon me."

There is no doubt that he was ungrateful to her, and that his ingratitude was wise. He was not one of the politicians who reward friends at the cost of the State. The Queen was destitute of political intelligence, and her career had shown how unfit she was for power; she expected Richelieu to listen to her counsels; he treated her with politeness and declined to heed her advice; she regarded him as

an ungrateful man, and he regarded her as an unwise woman, and both were right.

The record of her wanderings is not important except as it illustrates the extent of Richelieu's system of espionage. The schemes of the Queen-mother were not apt to ripen into action, and her abuse of the Cardinal was innocuous, but he wished that no thought of his enemies should escape him. Her health became impaired and a physician was sent her by the King; he probably ministered with fidelity to her ailments, but he certainly showed equal zeal in reporting the secrets of her life to the man she hated most. A priest, who was also an agent of the Cardinal, acted as intermediary, and the physician reported regularly the condition of the Queen's health, her railings against Richelieu, her hopes of his speedy death, and the plans of her followers. "They say," writes the doctor, "that his Eminence cannot live long, that he is covered with loathsome ulcers, and that Cinq-Mars now controls the King's councils." To such gossip, which the Cardinal could not have found agreeable, the physician presently added more welcome information, for he reported that the Queen herself could not live out the year. His prophecy was just, and in July, 1642, Mary de' Medici ended her years of exile. She died unhappy, disappointed, in need, except as she received aid from the treasury of the State which Richelieu governed. It would have been some consolation on her death-bed, if she could have known that the ingrate whom she hated had but six months more to live.

The year after Mary de' Medici, despairing of Richelieu's overthrow, fled from the soil polluted by his presence, an ill-advised and ill-fated insurrection showed that the minister's hand would be laid heavily even on the most illustrious insurgents. When his mother retired into voluntary exile, Gaston abandoned the Court and took refuge in Lorraine. That duchy was independent of France, in theory, if not in fact, and was ruled by a prince admirably fitted to command an army and entirely unfitted to govern a state. He at once espoused the cause of the fugitive; Gaston had become a widower; and the alliance was speedily cemented by his marrying Margaret of Lorraine. It was certain that this marriage would find no favour in France and that every effort would be made to annul it, but the duke declared it was worth while to risk spending one's days in a convent for the chance of becoming Queen of France, and Margaret took the hazard. As usually happens in life, she experienced neither the best nor the worst of fortune, she became neither nun nor queen.

With the avowed purpose of overthrowing Richelieu and obtaining for himself and his mother the royal favour which was diverted by a wicked minister, Gaston, in the following year, 1632, led a small body of troops into France. He marched through Burgundy unmolested, though finding no supporters, and at last reached Languedoc, where he had been promised the aid of a very great personage.

Henry, Duke of Montmorenci, was the governor of Languedoc, where his family had long exercised

an authority which hardly yielded to that of the King. Montmorenci had not been counted among Richelieu's enemies, but some disappointed ambitions stirred up the leaven of discontent, and, in an evil hour, he resolved to combine forces with Gaston. Levying war upon the King was manifestly high treason, but, in various pronunciamentos, the rebels sought to justify the act. Their aim, so they declared, was not to oppose the King, but to overthrow the tyrant who had usurped the royal authority; and Gaston styled himself lieutenant-general of the King for the purpose of repressing the violence and evil deeds of the Cardinal.

Apart from the influence exercised by Montmorenci, the people of Languedoc had a local grievance. They enjoyed a large degree of home rule, their provincial States still met and sought to regulate the quota which Languedoc should contribute to the needs of the general government, and the collection of all taxes was in the hands of local officials. In his desire for uniformity, Richelieu had intrusted the collection of certain imposts to officials appointed by the Crown, and this measure excited much discontent among a people tenacious of the privileges which distinguished them from other Frenchmen.

Many cities were ready, therefore, to follow Montmorenci into rebellion, and the States met and resolved to support him. Their assistance was of small avail. While the duke was a brave soldier, he was not the man to lead an army. The King had only a small force of soldiers in the province, but it proved quite sufficient. The armies met at

Castelnaudary, and any chance of victory for the insurgents was destroyed by Montmorenci's rashness. At the head of a small body of cavalry, he charged recklessly on the enemy, and was at once struck down and taken prisoner. When the report circulated that Montmorenci was killed, the recruits from Languedoc abandoned the field, and Gaston's army retreated in confusion. The commander of the royal forces said that he lost only eight men killed in the battle which put an end to the war.

The rebellion was promptly suppressed, and with some severity so far as the leaders were concerned. Citadels and fortified châteaux were destroyed, some officials were executed, nobles were deprived of their privileges, the temporalities of six bishoprics were seized as a punishment for the disloyal conduct of their incumbents. The humbler insurgents were pardoned, and Richelieu judiciously abandoned his efforts at uniformity and restored the local tax-gatherers in Languedoc. Gaston promised once more to obey the King and love the Cardinal; he was forgiven, but, in a few weeks, he again changed his mind and fled to Brussels.

These matters attracted little attention in the universal interest as to the fate of the Duke of Montmorenci. He had been taken prisoner in open rebellion, there could be no doubt that he was guilty of high treason, and that his offence was punishable with death. But rebellions had been frequent in the last twenty years, and while great nobles took the chances of death on the field, their execution as criminals was not regarded as within the realm of

HENRY, DUKE OF MONTMORENCI, MARSHAL OF FRANCE.

FROM A PORTRAIT BY BALTAZAR MONCORNET.

possibilities. Richelieu, indeed, had not spared those of high degree, but the Duke of Montmorenci was a far more important personage than any whom the Cardinal had sent to the block.

Among the proud and ancient nobility of France, the Montmorencis stood first; they had furnished six constables and twelve marshals to the army; their name had been illustrious during seven centuries of French history. Not only noble but royal families were proud to claim relationship with the race of the Montmorencis. The present duke was not unworthy of his great ancestry. He was a brave officer, a courteous gentleman, a faithful husband, and a pious Christian. He was beloved in Languedoc for his amiable and considerate character, he was admired by his soldiers for his courage and manly bearing. He was the senior baron of France, a duke, a marshal, the governor of a great province, a brother-in-law of the Prince of Condé. He was, said a contemporary, the noblest, richest, handsomest, most pious, and most gallant gentleman in the kingdom. A universal cry went up that his blood should be spared: princes and nobles asked for his pardon; the crowds in the street cried out for grace; services were held in the churches, and the Almighty was asked to come to the duke's relief; processions of religious penitents marched from station to station praying for his safety. Nor were threats wanting: forty gentlemen, it was said, had daggers ready for the Cardinal if he spilled the blood of Montmorenci.

But neither prayers nor threats could move that

cold and inexorable character. The King was by nature prone to severity, and it was easy to persuade him that appeals for clemency must be refused. Indeed, Montmorenci's eminence sealed his doom. The Cardinal wished the world should see that no one, however illustrious or powerful or nobly born, could bear arms against his sovereign without taking the risk of a felon's death.

The duke was tried before a local court, and on October 30, 1632, he was sentenced to be beheaded. There was little delay accorded a criminal, and Montmorenci was executed on the same day. All that prayers obtained from the King was a consent that he should be beheaded in the prison, instead of at the public place of execution. He met his fate like a gentleman and a Christian. Four in the afternoon was the hour fixed, but he asked that the time of execution might be two hours earlier, that he might die at the same hour as his Saviour. To Richelieu he left by his will a portrait of the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian, as proof that he was still his faithful servant.

"I bid you the last adieu, dear heart," he wrote his wife, "with the affection that has always been between us. And I beseech you by my soul, which I hope will soon be in Heaven, moderate your grief and receive this affliction from the Saviour. Adieu once more, dear heart."

He left no son, and the direct line of Montmorenci perished on the scaffold.

The Cardinal had to meet more dangerous adversaries than Montmorenci. He did not study the

politics of Germany more closely than the intrigues and changing humours of the Court, and at the Court were found his most adroit enemies. Of insurrection, incited by great nobles, there was little in the latter years of his administration; the merciless vigour with which they had been suppressed, the inexorable rigour which brought to the block even the chief of the great house of Montmorenci, discouraged such enterprises. If the Cardinal was not loved, he was greatly feared; his opponents caballed for his overthrow, but they no longer ventured to take up arms against the Government.

Richelieu's most bitter enemies were women. He possessed none of the arts which excite affection or admiration among women, and their influence was rarely exercised in his favour. The Queen-mother was the most inveterate in her hostility, but when she was at last driven from Court, there was nothing to fear from her. The King's wife loved the Cardinal no more than did the King's mother, but she was less active in seeking his overthrow. The gossip that accused Richelieu of endeavouring unsuccessfully to obtain her affection may be at once dismissed; he was not the man to become involved in any affair of the heart, nor was he foolish enough to make love to his master's wife.

The hostility of the two Queens was less dangerous, because the King wasted no affection on either of them. By force of persistence his mother at times had exerted some influence over him. His wife exerted no influence at any time; she was a woman of small capacity, whom Louis regarded

with an indifference that occasionally warmed into dislike. However groundless was the scandal about her and Buckingham, her admiration for the handsome adventurer and the foolish talk to which it gave rise were distasteful to the King. He was convinced, moreover, that in contemplating the possibility of his death she had decided to console herself with his brother, and no denials from her shook his firm belief. When he was on his death-bed, his wife sent a message asking his pardon for whatever she had done that displeased him, and she added a solemn declaration that she had taken no part in the conspiracies formed against him. "In my condition," replied the stubborn monarch, "I am bound to forgive her, but not to believe her." Spain and France were often at war; the Queen was justly suspected of sympathising with her own family, and she manifested no eagerness for the success of a husband who manifested no affection for her. If Louis did not love Richelieu, he liked his minister better than his wife. She had more reason to fear the Cardinal's ill-will towards her than he had to fear her ill-will towards him.

But a new source of peril was disclosed when Louis found women for whom he did care, and who cared nothing for Richelieu. The relations of Louis with the two maids of honour who in turn absorbed his affections, disclose the complex and unusual character of the man. The varied loves of his father and of his son present no strange features. Henry IV. and Louis XIV. fell in love with many pretty women after the manner of other men. They

ANNE OF AUSTRIA.

gave their mistresses money and titles, raised up children by them, and in due time quitted one for another, as the kings of France had done for centuries.

The amours of Louis XIII. were far different. He always desired some companion on whom he could bestow a puerile affection, but those on whom he lavished his devotion were usually men. The succession of male favourites was at last broken by a passion for two beautiful women, but a passion alike pure and grotesque. Mlle. de Hautefort was the first whose beauty and grace excited the ardour of the chaste King. She was a young girl of good family with scanty means, who was early left under the charge of her grandmother to be reared in the monotony of provincial life. Though fitted to shine, she led a tedious and obscure existence, and as she was both ambitious and pious she offered fervent prayers to God that He would have her sent to the Court. Her prayers were answered, and at fourteen she became one of the maids of honour of the Queen-mother. Her beauty charmed the new world in which she found herself, and soon excited Louis's admiration. The King was fond of music, and he composed little airs and songs, of which the charms of Mlle. de Hautefort were always the burden; at table he could look but on her; content to do without her favours himself, he was jealous of any suitor who endeavoured to invade his virtuous harem. Any jealousy the Queen might have had of the favourite was dispelled by the independent and loyal character of the girl, as well as by the

virtue of the King, for Louis's devotion was marked by a modesty which excited the amusement rather than the respect of the Court.

Though flattered by the royal attention, Mlle. de Hautefort in no way returned the King's affection; she was too proud to be his mistress, and, moreover, Louis was not a dangerous suitor. He never talked, she complained, but of his dogs and his hunting. He was, moreover, suspicious and melancholy, and with Mlle. de Hautefort's taste for raillery they had constant quarrels. These cast a cloud over the Court. Louis spoke to no one and no one dared to speak to him. He sat gloomily in a corner and yawned, gazing at the charmer in silence. At such times his chief occupation was to write out long statements of conversations between himself and his mistress, and voluminous *procès verbaux* of these lovers' quarrels were found among his papers after his death.

Even this bizarre affection excited the jealousy of the minister. Richelieu would have been pleased to have the good offices of the favourite, but he was rarely successful in obtaining the friendship of women. His foreign policy and his resolute character excited no admiration in a young girl who cared nothing about the power of Austria, but saw in the Cardinal a stern and bloody man who had exiled and beheaded many great nobles, had driven the Queen-mother out of France, and caused the King's wife to be treated with harshness and neglect. He has recorded his opinion of female influence with a bitterness due to his own experience. "There

are often," he writes, "greater perils in the intrigues of cabinets than in the most difficult affairs of State, there is more peril in becoming involved in matters in which women take part than in the greatest designs that princes may form." Mlle. de Hautefort scorned the Cardinal's favours and the wealth which he bestowed so liberally on those who helped him, and her relations with the King gave her opportunities to express her views concerning the minister. Louis always liked to hear Richelieu attacked, and enjoyed a safe opportunity of himself joining in the abuse. He could not deny himself the pleasure of speaking ill of the minister at his back, though he was too much abashed in that august presence to reproach him to his face. When the King joined with Richelieu's enemies in abusing the Cardinal, they felt that his disgrace must be near at hand. But having indulged in the luxury of denouncing his servant as a cruel, irreligious, and tyrannical minister, Louis was quite content to leave him in full possession of power.

As the Cardinal could not gain the good-will of the favourite he resolved that her influence with the King should be destroyed. Two methods were used to free Louis from her charms. He was exceedingly sensitive to censure or ridicule; Mlle. de Hautefort's tongue was sharp, and jests on the King which she had uttered or might have uttered, were repeated to him and caused him much annoyance. Then also an appeal was made to his religious fears, and he was alarmed by delineations of his love as a dangerous and ungodly passion.

In order promptly and surely to overthrow the favourite's influence, it was deemed expedient to choose a new one for the place. Mlle. de La Fayette, though less beautiful than her rival, was attractive in appearance and had a melancholy charm of manner which might prove more pleasing to Louis than the railleries of De Hautefort. The Bishop of Limoges, Saint Simon, and various ladies joined in the attempt to obtain for her the King's favour. It may be said to their credit that in this endeavour they knew they were not exposing the young girl's virtue to any serious peril. Mlle. de La Fayette was judiciously thrown in the King's way, and he soon transferred his affection to her. She was well fitted to excite and to keep the love of so peculiar a temperament. Louis's melancholy in the great place he held, his capricious and variable moods, his periods of mental depression, which had either amused or bored Mlle. de Hautefort, excited a sincere interest and sympathy in the mild and religious character of her successor. She felt a strong attachment for Louis, not as a king but as a man; he found this personal attachment a new experience, and into her ear he poured all the fulness of his heart.

But the Cardinal soon discovered that the change of favourites had only increased his own peril. Mlle. de La Fayette was even more indifferent than her predecessor to the wealth or position by which Richelieu tried to tempt her; to her pure and gentle character his harsh rule seemed odious; her tenderness bled for a persecuted and oppressed Queen;

her piety revolted against a worldly priest wasting untold lives in a struggle against the Church and Catholic princes. The Cardinal resolved that she also must be removed from the Court, and he sought to work upon her devotional feelings, and to induce her to enter upon a religious life. Such suggestions found an easy entrance into the girl's heart. Even the King's virtue sometimes failed him when overcome by his fondness for her. She became alarmed, and turned her thoughts to the safety that could only be found in a retreat from the world. The King feared that their affection might involve them in deadly sin, and he did not forbid this step. All means were used by the Cardinal to hasten her retreat; even the priest, who sometimes received the confessions of the young girl's heart, was in Richelieu's service and reported to him the daily progress that was making.

"She came yesterday morning," writes the priest, "to confess to me. She told me that her uncle wished her to promise that she would speak to the King before her retreat. We agreed that she should see the King tomorrow morning, and that on Monday morning she should go to Sainte Marie. She seemed entirely contented, and after this she received the communion."

A few weeks later, as she still delayed, we find a letter from the same priest to her, ingeniously expressed so as to affect a proud and sensitive nature.

"I wish," he writes, "to express my affliction at hearing from the mouths of persons of quality the false reports that calumny spreads of you: that the thought of

retreat has been only a feint to possess the affections of his Majesty more strongly, and to induce him to give you a great sum of money. . . . But I hope your virtue and courage will soon prevail. . . . Take a step worthy of your piety, birth, and constancy. God, angels, and men will esteem you more than when possible changes in the favour you possess will take away the merit and honour of the calling, which you can now adopt with so great glory."

Relatives and friends, who hoped for advantage from her favour, endeavoured in vain to check the pious resolve thus insidiously encouraged. The King was submissive to her desire. "It is true she is dear to me," he said, "but if God calls her to religion, I will offer no obstacle." At times his feelings overcame him. He said to Father Caussin, weeping: "Why does she hasten? Could she not delay some months until I leave for the army? This separation might then be less severe, but now I am dying from it." But his piety again triumphed. "Nothing has cost me as much as what I am now doing, but God must be obeyed. Tell her that I allow her to go." She bade farewell to the King quietly, but as his carriage drove away, she cried out, "Alas! I shall see him no more." Her favour had begun in 1635. On the 19th of May, 1637, she entered the Convent of the Visitation.

The Cardinal had not only to fear the hostile voice of women who saw in him a crúel man, engaged in carrying on war against the true religion, but the royal confessor sought also to exert the great influence which he held over the timorous

conscience of the King, in a way prejudicial to the minister. The confessor was then Father Caussin, a Jesuit whom Richelieu had selected as a safe man, who would take care of the King's morals and let alone his politics. The minister was mistaken in his judgment of the priest. Father Caussin felt that the King was engaged in evil courses, under the influence of an ambitious and unscrupulous minister, and that upon his confessor devolved the duty of turning Louis from the damnable sins in which his course as a sovereign involved him.

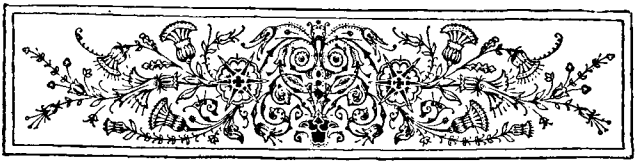
The priest sought to alarm the King's conscience by pointing out the evils his policy was working. His alliance with the Protestants of Germany, he told Louis, had caused the ruin of religion: more than six thousand churches had been destroyed or abandoned; in great districts no mass was said; the relics of the saints were trodden under foot; the sacred vessels were used for profane purposes; the virgins consecrated to the Lord were scattered abroad; and by his minister's counsels the King was induced to violate all laws, human and divine.

The Cardinal was suspicious of anyone whose relations with the King became intimate, and he sought to pry into the frequent interviews which the confessor had with Louis. He often entered the King's cabinet when Father Caussin was there, and to allay his suspicions Louis had a little book prepared with special offices for his use on great feasts and saints' days. When Richelieu came into the

room, King and priest appeared to be searching the Bible for passages to be used for some new form or office; but after he retired they returned to the discussion of matters of State. Though Mlle. de La Fayette had retired to the convent, her influence over the King had not ceased. He was allowed to visit her at the convent; they held long conversations and mingled their tears through the wicket which divided her from the world, and she still endeavoured to turn the King from his impious wars and his cruel minister.

The task of inducing Louis to change the policy which he had adopted at Richelieu's dictation was not an easy one, and the Cardinal was able to baffle his enemies. He discovered that Father Caussin, under cover of the confessional, was seeking to overthrow his power, and the conduct of the confessor seemed criminal to the man who had been his protector. "It was," Richelieu writes, "the blackest and most damnable malice that ever entered into the mind of a monk." But the Cardinal could control the King's scrupulous and wavering mind, and he now proved by the opinions of theologians that the alliances with the Protestants were in conformity with God's law. He asked Louis if he expected to govern his kingdom by the counsels of a novice of the Visitation, and of an ignorant and credulous priest, and the King, on this, as on many other occasions, yielded to the force of his minister's arguments. Father Caussin was dismissed and sent to Brittany, where he occupied his time in bewailing his lot and bemoaning his disgrace. His place was

filled by Father Sirmond, who was also a Jesuit, but who discreetly confined his attention to the King's spiritual welfare and did not interfere with his temporal policy.



CHAPTER VI

THE ADMINISTRATION OF RICHELIEU

1624–1642

THE constant struggle to retain power did not divert Richelieu from the accomplishment of the objects for which he desired to hold power. He was not a man to be content with the mere possession of office, the wealth it brought, or the paraphernalia by which it was surrounded; he wished to be prime minister that he might execute the internal reforms which he believed would make France prosperous, and carry out the foreign policy which he believed would render her great.

In every branch of the administration his will controlled, and his activity extended from appointing a petty official to deciding on peace or war, from scolding about the provisions furnished a regiment to directing the plans of a campaign. It was a mistake that he attempted so much, for no man could supervise all the details of a great government. The chaotic condition of the administration rendered his task still more difficult, and the prime minister would often send repeated orders to generals in the

field or to officials in the interior, with little certainty that they would be carried into effect.

The Cardinal had entire confidence in his own judgment; he did not seek the advice of others, and still less did he desire to guide his steps by the counsels of any legislative body. Yet in the early years of his career he twice summoned assemblies of notables, to whose judgment he submitted pressing questions of State. The first met in 1625, and had little to do except declare its approval of the war which Richelieu had already undertaken in the Valtelline. In the following year a second assembly was convened, to which more extensive duties were intrusted. To this were bidden twelve nobles, as many of the clergy, some members of the courts and officers of finance, and a few great dignitaries. They were summoned, so ran the formal commission, to recommend to the King, without fear or favour, whatever in their consciences they regarded as most advantageous to the public weal; but an assembly where most of the members were in some way connected with the administration, and all attended at the King's bidding, was certain not to suggest any novel policy nor indulge in any disagreeable criticism on measures that had been adopted. Nominally they were convened as advisers, but really the Cardinal desired the approval of persons of influence, because he was not yet strong enough to be indifferent to the approval of anyone except the King. Tractable as the assembly proved, the Cardinal never troubled himself again to summon either nobles or commonalty. He ruled France, asking

no counsel and fearing no opposition from Church, nobility, or third estate.

In those early years many measures of utility were proposed, not all of which, unfortunately, were carried into effect. In 1626, an edict directed the destruction of all fortified castles, except as they were required for defence in case of foreign war. The work of destruction was left to the local authorities, and the popular ill-will against strongholds, many of which had been the seats of petty tyranny and curses to the neighbourhood in which they stood, insured the prompt and willing accomplishment of the royal order.

The new minister undertook more important work when he sought to make improvements in the financial system. It must be admitted that he accomplished little; his fame does not rest on the ability he displayed as a minister of finance, and yet a complete transformation of the methods of French taxation was the one thing that might have averted the French Revolution. That event was far removed in Richelieu's time, but its causes were already in operation.

It was the fundamental trouble with French taxation that the most of it fell upon those who were least able to bear it. Land owned by the nobility and by the Church was practically exempt, though from land the Government derived the largest part of its revenues. The enormous duty on salt was a severe imposition on the poor; and there were many other forms of taxation which added to their burden. The cost of government is often the chief obstacle to

the prosperity of the governed; this was true in France when Richelieu assumed power, and it was equally true when he relinquished power.

Taxation would have been heavy if levied equally upon all property; its burden became far more severe when it fell in large proportion upon the scanty property of the poor. Yet few thought of changing the system; the exemptions allowed the privileged orders had long existed, and though many grumbled, few questioned their validity. At the assembly of notables in 1626, a courageous president of the Court of Aids asked that the *taille* should be levied equally on all land, no matter who was the owner, but he could secure only three votes for his proposed reform. Certainly Richelieu had no thought of pressing it. He desired the prosperity of the country, but he was a noble by birth and a churchman by profession. In his testament he declared that if the mass of the people found themselves in a condition of too great ease they might become insubordinate and unruly. He was not a man to suggest changes that would have modified the entire social system for the benefit of those who held the lowest place in it.

Bad as was the theory of taxation, it became worse in practice. Most of the taxes were farmed, and the right of collecting them was sold to the highest bidder. Only persons of wealth could enter a competition which required the payment of millions of ready money to the King; the tax farmers secured unconscionable bargains from the Government and increased their profits by unconscionable

exactions from the people. All the evils caused by dishonest public contractors and dishonest public servants, in the most corrupt of modern states, do not equal those which resulted from the system of farming taxes; and yet so slow is the progress of improvement, especially when it is at the cost of powerful private interests, that the practice of farming taxes in France survived until the Revolution.

When Richelieu became minister he endeavoured to check the disorders he found in the Government's finances. Corruption is sure to be prevalent when there is a good opportunity for it; where stealing is made easy there will always be thieves; and in the chaos of French administration the public could be plundered with much ease and little danger. "When I was an officer of finance," said a well-known character a century later, "I stole like all the rest." The same remark would have been made by a person of similar frankness in Richelieu's day.

The Cardinal imprisoned his predecessor in office on a well-founded charge of peculation, and then instituted measures against the farmers of taxes. Such attacks were frequently made; the farmers bought immunity for the past and for a reasonable time in the future, by turning over to the State some part of their surplus. They were not often impoverished by these proceedings. The wealth they had accumulated was in itself a protection, and they had, moreover, potent allies at the Court and among the nobility. In that age, as in all ages, the members of noble houses replenished their

diminished estates by marrying heiresses, without regard to their pedigree. A pamphleteer of Richelieu's time writes: "There is not a financier who does not live like a lord and dress like a prince, and many of them are allied to the most illustrious houses in the kingdom. Is it not horrible to see Jacquet marrying the niece of the Duke of Mayenne, and the daughter of Feydeau marrying the Count of Lude?" and so on through a long list of misalliances.

Richelieu now instituted proceedings against the body of tax farmers to compel a restitution of their excessive profits. The proceeding was Eastern in its simplicity; the culprits were fined with regard to their supposed wealth, rather than from any evidence of corrupt conduct; they bought their peace as best they could, and the system went on as before. Eleven millions were obtained from them at this time; the sum they paid for immunity is an indication of the amount they had stolen. With the general improvement in administration under Richelieu the taxes were farmed somewhat more for the public advantage than under Mary de' Medici. That is about all that France owed to Richelieu as a minister of finance.

By an edict of 1634, an endeavour was made to reduce the number exempted from the *taille*, but those whose immunities were invaded raised a storm of protest, and Richelieu, less resolute in attempts at financial reform than when he sought to strengthen the power of the central Government, allowed the edict to fall into practical disuse.

No better success attended another measure, which

might have been productive of large benefits. In 1629, a lengthy edict which, from its framer, was called the Code Michau, sought to deal with a great variety of internal questions: it regulated not only the administration of justice but the reformation of monasteries; it forbade parents sending their children out of the kingdom to be educated; it imposed penalties upon oppressive acts by unruly nobles; it prescribed the discipline of soldiers, and allowed gentlemen to take part in foreign commerce without derogating from their rank. Almost all the regulations of the code were useful, but they were also novel, and social and political changes were not then viewed with favour.

If the edict was drafted by Michau, it embodied the ideas of Richelieu, but he was strangely irresolute in seeking to enforce it in the face of public disapproval. The measure met with vigorous opposition from the courts, not only because it interfered with their procedure, but because they were opposed to innovations. No one showed less regard for the courts than Richelieu when he wished to insure the punishment of an enemy or to coerce resistance to the royal authority, but he was unable or unwilling to overcome the stubborn hostility of the judges to a measure of reform. It shared the fate of many wise laws which appeared on the French statute books, only to be first disregarded and then forgotten.

The changes which the Cardinal made in the internal administration of France will be discussed in another chapter. We have now to consider his

foreign policy, and the results it produced in France and in Europe.

After the overthrow of the Huguenot party, there was no fear of any serious internal disturbance, and the Cardinal was free to deal with foreign powers. He had already sent French troops to Italy to enforce the rights of the French heir to the duchy of Mantua, and to protect the Swiss cantons in the Valtelline, and during the most of his administration France supported armies in Italy, without, however, accomplishing very important results. In truth, the Cardinal entertained no dreams of conquests beyond the Alps; he desired only to lessen the influence of Spain and to check the aggressions of Austria. French blood and money had flown freely in schemes for transalpine aggrandisement, but these had always resulted in disaster. Richelieu was a zealous supporter of the French claimant to the duchy of Mantua; he sought to direct the policy of the Duke of Savoy, with whose family the French King was closely allied, but, except a few frontier towns, he made no acquisitions in Italy; he knew that such possessions would be elements of weakness rather than of strength.

If the Cardinal sought no Italian territory for France, he looked with ill-will on the great possessions held by Spain, for Naples, Sicily, and Milan were subject to that country and Spanish influence was paramount in the Italian peninsula. While the French insisted that the country should be freed from foreign control, there was no thought of a united Italy. Such an idea would have seemed as

strange to Italian patriots as to foreign statesmen; it was almost two centuries later before the demand for a united country became important, so slow is the development of new political conceptions.

Richelieu's own plan was for a confederation of the Italian states under the nominal leadership of the Pope, but this project pleased nobody. The papacy desired no political experiments, and the Italian princes looked with distrust upon the Pope as a political leader. The combination was not feasible; the Cardinal soon recognised what was possible in politics, and did not press his scheme. The success of his career was largely due to the justness of his political vision; his ambitions were as practical as those of Frederick II., and he was never led astray by the vague dreams that allured Napoleon. He accomplished much because he set strict limits to what he undertook.

In the course of these Italian campaigns, the Cardinal first met Mazarin, and in 1630 he saw somewhat of the man who was to be his successor. Mazarin was then a young Italian of twenty-eight, in the service of the Pope; he was popular from his winning manners, and had already gained a certain prominence in Italian politics. He seems to have been charmed by Richelieu's imposing personality, but the Cardinal distrusted the smooth-tongued Italian, and did not at once admit him to his favour. "What he says cannot be received for gospel truth," Richelieu writes Mary de' Medici. In 1634, Mazarin secured the coveted honour of being sent to Paris as papal nuncio, and he took an active

part in negotiations in which France was interested. The power and splendour to which Richelieu had attained suggested visions to the young diplomat more attractive than any promotion he could hope from the papal court. He laboured diligently to obtain Richelieu's confidence, and he was wise enough to be faithful to a master in whose service there was much to gain. He became a French subject, and was intrusted with important missions, in which he showed extraordinary ability as a diplomat.

"I cannot tell you," Richelieu wrote him in 1639, "my contentment that your negotiations with Prince Thomas have been successful. God has allowed you to show in this matter what you can accomplish in the greater and more important treaties in which you will take part. . . . You may be sure that in all times and places, I shall be, not uselessly, your servant."

"The Cardinal has sent me a letter," Mazarin wrote to a friend, "that would rouse me, if I were dead."

When Richelieu gave his confidence, he gave it fully. Mazarin was selected as an ambassador to the congress by which the Thirty Years' War was at last brought to an end, and he was designated as the representative of France at the conclave by which Innocent X. was elected Pope. So much were his services needed in France that he went on neither mission, and the death of Father Joseph left him confessedly the ablest and most trusted of Richelieu's assistants. When the Cardinal was on his death-bed, he told Louis that Mazarin was the man best fitted to fill his place, and the statesman showed his sagacity in his farewell counsel. There

was no French-born subject who could have continued Richelieu's foreign policy with the success of Mazarin. Despite the weaknesses of his character, the Italian was a diplomat of extraordinary ability; the treaties of Westphalia and the Pyrenees were the triumphs of his policy, and they crowned the work of Richelieu. Louis XIII. yielded to the Cardinal's judgment after his death, as he had in his lifetime. Three years after Mazarin became a French citizen, he was the prime minister of France.

The interference of France in Italian politics was only one chapter of the long struggle against Spain and the Emperor, and it produced no important results. Mazarin himself was perhaps the most valuable acquisition the French made in Italy; but in another field, where there was an opportunity for important and permanent advantage, Richelieu pursued with unwearied persistence the object in view.

The great and populous province of Lorraine lay next to French soil; it furnished a shield against German invasion, and Richelieu followed the established lines of French policy in his endeavours to bring this territory under French control. The acquisition of Lorraine by France occupied almost two centuries, and the slow process of absorption was in curious contrast to the rapidity with which it was wrested from France by Prussia.

In the long and varied history of the province, its relations had in turn been intimate with the Empire and with the French kingdom, but for a century before the days of Richelieu, although Lorraine

remained nominally a part of the Holy Roman Empire, it was more closely bound to France than to any of the German states. During the religious wars of the sixteenth century, the family of Guise, who sprang from Lorraine, became the most influential personages in French politics. The situation of Lorraine favoured close relations between its people and the French; French was the language spoken by the most of them, and its boundaries at all times lay open to invasion by a French army.

Richelieu fully appreciated the importance of this province; if it was not formally annexed to the French kingdom, he intended that the policy of the Duke of Lorraine should be controlled by the King of France. But not even Richelieu could control the policy of a duke who was by nature so fickle, so rash, and so indiscreet that his actions could be governed neither by counsel nor by force. A judicious ruler would have avoided any quarrel with a powerful kingdom, which adjoined his own possessions, but Duke Charles gave the Cardinal constant grounds of offence, of which the latter was quite ready to avail himself.

In 1632 the French invaded Lorraine, and, with little trouble took possession of the duchy. Charles bought his peace by the surrender of Clermont, Stenai, and Jametz, a result which Richelieu sententiously remarked should teach little princes not to offend great princes. The duke did not profit by the lesson, but continued to befriend the vagrant Gaston and to oppose Richelieu's allies in Germany. Thereupon the French again invaded Lorraine, and

this time Charles could only make terms by the surrender of Nancy, the capital of his province, and the most strongly fortified city in it. By the agreement made, the city was to remain in French possession until all difficulties between the duke and the French King should be adjusted. Richelieu remarked that this might take until eternity, and he was certainly willing that it should.

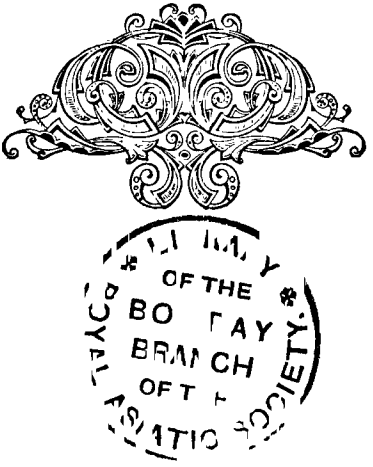
The difficulties were indeed interminable. The duke constantly offended his powerful neighbour and involved his province in hostilities with both France and Sweden. The Cardinal was an imperious protector and the duke was very loath to be protected. The turmoil in which Lorraine was involved by the unwise policy of its ruler rendered the condition of the inhabitants almost as miserable as that of the sections of Germany which were devastated by the Thirty Years' War. The land was ravaged by Swedes and by French; crops were destroyed and towns burned; famine alternated with pestilence, until more than half the population had perished or fled from the country. Richelieu wrote that a century would be required to repopulate the burned villages, sacked cities, and wasted fields. But the ravages of war are soon effaced when the husbandman and the artisan can labour in security. As a result of all these bickerings, in 1641 the French took possession of the entire province; they held it for more than twenty years, and the country enjoyed comparative freedom from commotion.

Richelieu hoped that the province would now become a part of the French kingdom. If the Duke

of Lorraine owed feudal obedience to the King, wrote the Cardinal, his possessions were forfeited by his disloyal conduct; if he did not, the province could be justly held as a prize of war, and the minister insisted that no surrender of conquered territory by other powers should be regarded as an argument for the surrender of Lorraine by France. It was still in French hands when Richelieu died, but its immediate destiny was not what he had hoped. It seemed unlikely that France would surrender the province after holding it so long, but in 1663 it was restored to its former rulers, and Lorraine, although controlled by French influence, did not become a part of that kingdom until a century later.

In most respects the foreign policy which Richelieu adopted differed from that which found acceptance before he assumed power. Mary de' Medici had sought to cement a union between France and Spain by the marriages of her children; the Cardinal sought in every way to check the growth of Spanish power, and to build up on its ruin a preponderating influence for France in European politics. He was a cardinal of the Church, but religious sympathies had little influence upon his policy as a statesman. He entered the field of German politics as an ally of Protestant states, and to protect the liberties of Protestant princes from the encroachments of a Catholic emperor. When such was his course, it was certain that France must become an actor in the great war by which the religious and political relations of Germany were to be settled.

Richelieu's participation in the Thirty Years' War was the most important measure of his foreign policy; it modified the future of Germany, it made France the leader among continental powers, it absorbed the resources of the country and the energies of the minister during all the latter years of his administration.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CHAPTER VII

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

1618–1648

THE Thirty Years' War began before Richelieu assumed power, and raged for ten years before France took any part. Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany had long been in a condition of unstable equilibrium, and the succession of Ferdinand II., a fervent Catholic and a pupil of the Jesuits, brought on the inevitable conflict. The sympathies of France, as a great Catholic power, would naturally have been with Ferdinand. Richelieu was a cardinal; his promotion had been advocated by those earnest for the triumph of Catholicism, he began his career by overthrowing the power of the Huguenots in France, and it could not have been expected that he would take up arms to assist heretics against the head of the Holy Roman Empire.

At the beginning of the contest, the expression of French opinion was on the whole favourable to Ferdinand; he had apparently no reason to anticipate

interference with his plans for restoring to the Church what she had lost, and, if France had not interfered, it is probable that the triumph of Catholicism in Germany would have been complete. For ten years, Ferdinand's career was one of almost unbroken success. Frederick, the Elector Palatine, the unlucky son-in-law of James I. of England, was called to the throne of Bohemia by the Protestants, whose privileges were disregarded. Not only was he speedily defeated and driven from the country, but his hereditary dominions were overrun by the imperial armies, and he found himself a homeless wanderer.

Success incited Ferdinand to new efforts. When he mounted the throne, the majority of his subjects in Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary were Protestant; by a merciless persecution, he crushed out heresy in all his hereditary possessions, and he now hoped for much greater things. Protestant rulers in Germany held vast possessions, that had once been the property of the Church, and their title, as Ferdinand believed, was based on a denial of God's rights. It was true that this condition of things had long existed, that the titles of these rulers had been recognised by numerous treaties, and formed an acknowledged part of the political system of Germany. Such arguments were deemed of no weight by the Jesuit advisers to whom Ferdinand listened. "No agreement of man," they said, "could avail against the rights of God, no statute of limitations ran against the Almighty."

Accordingly, in 1629, Ferdinand issued the famous

Edict of Restitution, by which he directed that all ecclesiastical property confiscated since the Treaty of Passau should be returned to its lawful owners. If this could have been carried into effect, it would have crippled the power of almost every Protestant prince of Germany, and a great step would have been taken towards securing the complete ascendancy of the Catholic Church in that country. And it seemed that it might be carried into effect, for the Protestants were unable to resist the Emperor's forces. In the past, his progress had often been checked, because the Catholic princes feared the growth of imperial power, but he was no longer dependent on those uncertain allies. Wallenstein had revolutionised the military system of the land, he had collected a great army, united by the hope of plunder and by confidence in the genius of its leader; this force was enlisted in the Emperor's service, and all Germany was overawed by it. With such an army, and with Wallenstein as his general, Ferdinand was strong enough to render his authority over the scattered members of the Empire no longer a pretence but a reality.

The vastness of Ferdinand's plans prevented their accomplishment. He would have been left unhindered by Richelieu, if he had only sought to exterminate heresy. Though the Cardinal was too wise to weaken his own country by expelling Protestants from it, he was not inclined to interfere in their behalf elsewhere; if he had no strong sympathy with persecution, he had no strong prejudice against it. But the success of Ferdinand's policy would

greatly strengthen the Empire of which he was the head. Richelieu had no wish to see a united Germany, even if it were united under the leadership of a good Catholic; with him political ambition was stronger than religious sympathy. Moreover, the Emperor and the King of Spain were allied in blood and in religious zeal; if the overweening power of the House of Austria were to be checked, it was necessary for France to arrest the victorious career of Ferdinand II.

In 1630, the fortunes of Ferdinand were at their zenith; he had crushed heresy in his hereditary dominions, thousands of families had been driven into exile, towns had been destroyed, and fields laid waste, but the ascendancy of the Catholic faith was permanently assured. The Elector Palatine was still an exile, resistance to the imperial orders was hardly attempted, and the Edict of Restitution threatened the political existence of most German princes of the Reformed faith.

But the animosity of the minor Catholic powers had already compelled Ferdinand to dismiss from his service his ablest general. It was not strange that Wallenstein was hated by all save his own soldiers; he was a cold and ruthless man, and his great horde of mercenaries plundered friend and foe alike, demanding contributions from the faithful, levying toll upon the heretic, and enforcing all demands by prompt and impartial pillage. Deaf to complaints and indifferent to animosities, Wallenstein had proceeded on his victorious career, exercising such a control over the soldiers who profited

ALBERT VON WALLENSTEIN.

DUKE OF FRIEDLAND AND MECKLENBURG.

by the license their leader allowed that he believed the Emperor would not venture to disgrace him.

If Ferdinand feared Wallenstein's dangerous ambition, he was loath to dismiss a general at whose name an army had collected strong enough to insure victory and overawe opposition. But the complaints of his allies and of the electors, from whom he desired to secure his son's election as King of the Romans, at last obtained his consent to Wallenstein's overthrow. Father Joseph attended the council where this was decided upon, and it was said his insidious advice had much to do with Wallenstein's dismissal. However this may be, the general was relieved of his command, and to the surprise of most, he submitted without resistance. "The Emperor has been betrayed," he said; "I pity him, but I forgive him." He withdrew to Bohemia, where he lived in strict retirement, waiting until Ferdinand in his sore need should again call him from his retreat.

The loss of their commander was a serious one to the imperial armies, when for the first time they were to be opposed by a great general; and in the hour of Ferdinand's great prosperity the condition of affairs was changed by the appearance of a new enemy. Apparently the Emperor had little to fear from Sweden; that kingdom was neither populous nor rich; it was far removed, and had taken little part in German politics. But the Swedish King was Gustavus Adolphus, a man of thirty-six, who had gained reputation as a valiant soldier; he was ambitious, he was a fervent Protestant, and was

ready to embark in the cause of his persecuted brethren. Richelieu had already decided that France must take measures to check the growth of Austrian power, and, in 1628, by a secret treaty he promised Gustavus a subsidy if he would invade Germany. After some delay the Swedish King resolved to undertake the perilous enterprise. In 1630 he bade a solemn farewell to his own people.

"God is my witness," he said, "that I do not fight from any lust for war, but the Emperor has insulted my ambassadors, oppressed my friends and persecuted my religion. . . . The downtrodden states of Germany cry to us for help, and God willing, we will give it to them."

In June he landed on the coast of Pomerania, but those he came to save were in such awe of the Emperor that they feared to rally around the standard of their deliverer. At Vienna the invasion was regarded with contempt. "This snow king will soon melt away" was the universal sentiment.

The force which Gustavus led from Sweden was not large, but it was composed of the best soldiers in the world; men well drilled in tactics, well versed in their catechism, who waged war with conviction as well as valour, and fought and prayed with equal zeal. He had more than the piety of his soldiers in which to trust, for, in 1631, Richelieu made a further treaty with Sweden, by which Gustavus was promised a large subsidy. This treaty the Swedish King at once made public, and fortified by the open alliance of France, he no longer

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS II.

appeared as a forlorn and needy adventurer. Richelieu wished to check the imperial power, but he wished also to obtain what advantages he could for those of his faith, and he asked Gustavus to agree that the exercise of the Catholic religion should again be allowed in places where it had been forbidden. But the Swedish King was unwilling to alienate the Protestant princes whose aid he desired; he promised that Catholics should not be disturbed in the exercise of their faith where it was already allowed, and with this Richelieu was forced to be content.

For a while the fate of Gustavus's expedition seemed doubtful. The imperial army captured the great city of Magdeburg; it was laid waste until hardly one stone remained upon another, and Tilly boasted that such devastation had not been witnessed since the destruction of Jerusalem. This lamentable victory was to be his last. On September 17, 1631, the opposing armies met on the field of Breitenfeld. Tilly suffered a crushing defeat, the imperial army lost nineteen thousand men, and Gustavus established his position as the greatest captain in Europe.

Like Napoleon, he understood the art of utilising victory; one battle made him the dictator of Germany. He marched to the Rhine, and by the time he reached it his army of twenty-four thousand had grown to sixty thousand; all Protestant Germany rallied to his cause, and the Catholic princes made the best terms they could. He crossed the river, but the success of Richelieu's ally exceeded

Richelieu's desires, and his approach to Lorraine was viewed with ill-concealed apprehension. Gustavus did not wish to alienate a powerful friend; he re-crossed the Rhine, and by March, 1632, he had driven the Duke of Bavaria from Munich, and the whole of Southern Germany was at his mercy.

In the hour of prosperity the Emperor had been willing to sacrifice Wallenstein to the animosity of his enemies, but in his sore distress he turned to the great general as his only hope of salvation. His appeals met with a chilly reception. After his dismissal, Wallenstein had led a life of solitary grandeur in his castle in Bohemia, holding little intercourse with man, poring over the mysteries of astrology, and seeking to read in the stars the secret of his fate. He told the Emperor's messengers that he was done with earthly ambitions, and sought only rest and retirement, and it was long before he would give any other answer. At last he was induced to come from his retreat, but he did so only upon condition that his army should be absolutely under his own command, and the Emperor himself should neither direct its movements nor control its leader. It was suggested that Ferdinand's son might be associated in the command. "I will have no associate," was Wallenstein's reply, "not if God Himself wished to divide the command with me."

As soon as Wallenstein appeared in the field a great army rallied at the call of the victorious general, but whether he was unwilling to risk defeat, or uncertain in which way he could best advance his own fortunes, he was slow in putting his forces to

COUNT VON TILLY.

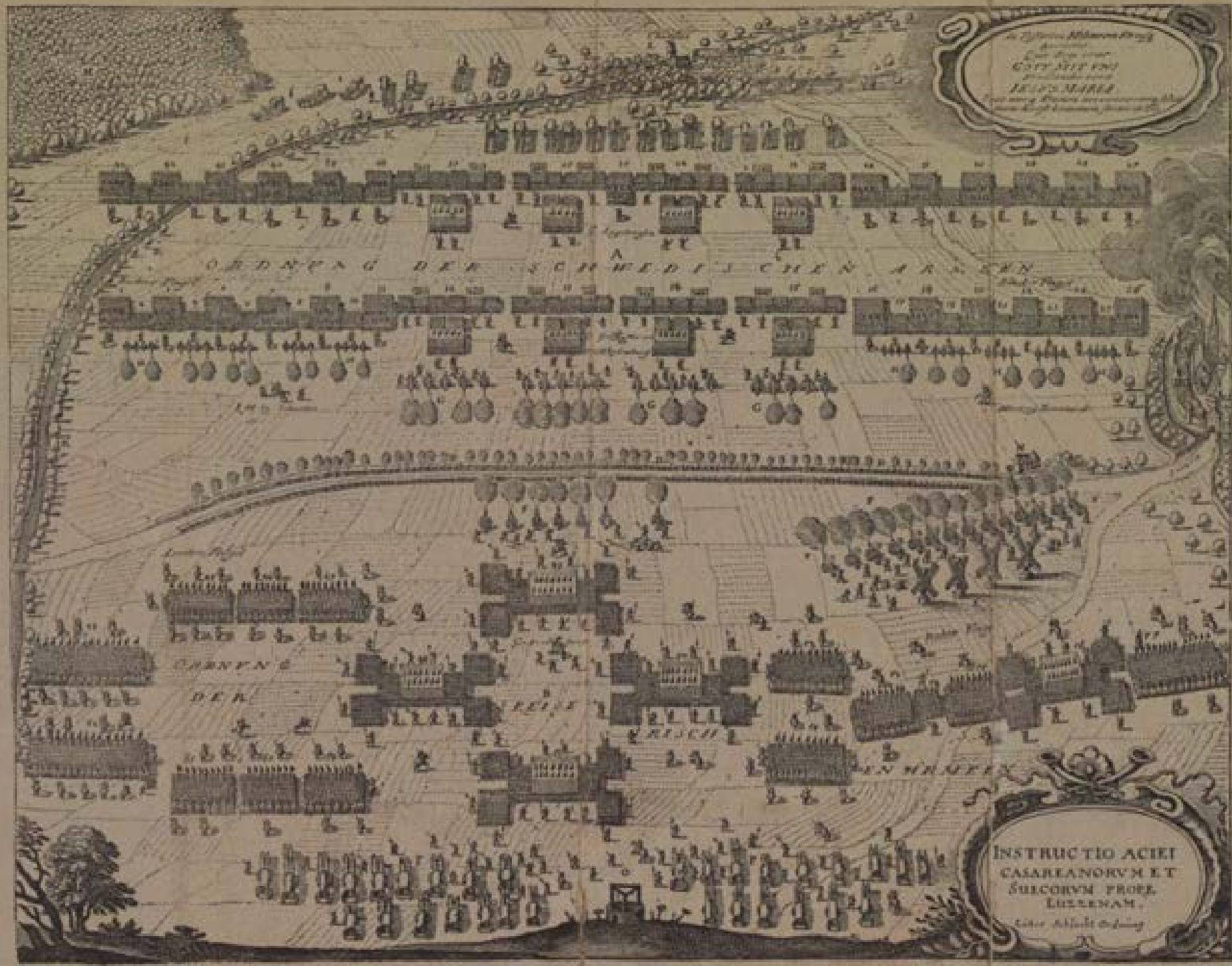
any useful purpose. Gustavus invaded Bavaria and proceeded to lay waste the country. Hitherto it had escaped the miseries of war; the fields were tilled, the houses unburned, the barns filled with produce, and the pockets of the burghers filled with money. It could, therefore, furnish rich plunder, and as pillagers there was now little difference between the armies of the Emperor and the armies of Sweden. A host of mercenaries had been added to the little force of God-fearing men with whom Gustavus landed in Germany, and never has the science of devastation been practised more thoroughly than by the armies which laid waste German soil during the Thirty Years' War.

The Duke of Bavaria cried loudly for aid, but Wallenstein hated the duke, and would not hasten to his assistance. The Emperor was powerless to give orders, and Wallenstein viewed the devastation of Bavaria with calmness and content. At last he consented to join his forces with the Bavarian army, and the allies laid siege to Nüremberg. Gustavus led his troops to the relief of the town, and the armies camped opposite one another before that ancient city. For more than two months they watched each other, until forty thousand men had perished from disease, and the surrounding country was laid so bare that sufficient food for the troops could no longer be found. Then Gustavus broke camp and marched away, and Wallenstein followed.

On November 16, 1632, fourteen months after the victory at Breitenfeld, the armies met at Lützen,

almost in sight of the former battle-field. Within that short period the aspect of the war had changed. Then Ferdinand had hoped to crush out dissent and establish his power over all Germany; now he feared for the safety of his hereditary dominions. If Gustavus had conquered at Lützen and lived to utilise his victory, the history of Germany would have been changed, but this was not to be. The King prayed before his troops, they sang a hymn to the God of battles, and then marched against Wallenstein. The battle was stubbornly contested, and at last the Swedes were left in possession of the field, but they had won a disastrous victory. Gustavus exposed himself with his usual reckless courage; he was mortally wounded and fell dead on the battle-field. In little over a year he had made himself the foremost man in Europe; he had established his reputation as one of the world's great captains, he had become the hero of Protestantism, he had gained a fame which is fresh after more than two centuries, and will endure for centuries yet to come.

It is doubtful if Richelieu heard of Gustavus's death with regret; the genie which the Cardinal had evoked proved so potent that he was filled with apprehension. He wished to check Ferdinand's power, but when the morning mists broke before the battle of Lützen, Gustavus was more powerful than Ferdinand had ever been. If the King had lived, it is certain that the alliance between France and Sweden would sooner or later have come to an end. Gustavus was not the man to shape his policy to suit the views of another, his victories



PLAN OF THE BATTLE AT LÜTZEN, NOVEMBER 16, 1632.

Explanation of Terms.—Ordnung der Schevedischen Armeen (Order of the Swedish Armies). Ordnung der Keiserischen Armeen (Order of the Imperial Armies).

rendered him independent of French aid, he would have built up a Protestant empire that might have changed the future of Germany, and would have seemed to Richelieu more dangerous than the House of Austria.

All this was altered by the death of Gustavus, for there was no one to execute the great designs that had been possible for his genius. As a result of his victories, a large part of Germany had ranged itself under his leadership, and Sweden was the head of a loosely formed confederation to which France furnished pecuniary aid. After Gustavus's death, this combination of diverse interests was in peril of dissolution, and Richelieu decided that France must take more active part in the war, or the results that had been attained would soon be lost. But a formal declaration of war was still averted, and, for a while, the French furnished assistance in money rather than in men.

Gustavus was succeeded on the throne by his young daughter Christina, and the command of the Swedish army was assumed by Chancellor Oxenstierna, who held a position in Sweden as commanding as that of Richelieu in France. For a while fortune favoured the allies notwithstanding the loss of their leader, and the death of Gustavus was soon followed by the murder of the imperial general. The mystery of the intrigues in which the last months of Wallenstein's life were passed has never been fully solved; his policy was controlled by ambition, and he deliberated long whether he could better further his interests by loyalty or by treason.

On the whole, he seems to have decided that to betray his master would be the best means of advancing his fortunes and punishing his enemies.

It was believed that the great *condottiere* could lead his army to any cause which he espoused, and the bids were high; if he would declare war on the Emperor, whose subject he was, he was promised by the Swedes a subsidy of a million and the crown of Bohemia. The crown was the object on which his gaze was fixed, but he had been so long involved in plots and counter-plots, that he lacked decision when the moment for action came. While he was still meditating on treason, he was murdered by some of his followers, who had learned from him to regard fighting as a means of gain, and who killed their general to be rewarded by the Emperor. Ferdinand could well afford to be liberal to the assassins, for they removed a great danger, and shattered the hopes which France and Sweden had built on Wallenstein's treason.

The allies now had to trust to fair fighting, and the conflict continued with varying success. In 1635, war was formally declared by France against Ferdinand and Spain, and from that time until Richelieu's death the contest engaged his attention and absorbed the resources of the country. Not until six years after his death was the long struggle ended, but the results were sufficient compensation for what the war had cost. Apart from the pacification of Germany, and the end of the religious warfare, which for two centuries had devastated Europe, France gained important accessions to her territory,

and her position was established as the foremost of the great powers.

These results were attained only by years of exhaustive strife, and during Richelieu's administration the contest was carried on with dogged pertinacity, but with only moderate success. The Cardinal was sagacious in choosing the wisest policy for France, but he had not the ability to bring a war to a speedy and successful termination. If he retained enough of his early studies to have some taste for the details of warfare, he manifested no talent for its conduct. A valetudinarian priest could not be blamed if he was unskilful in planning campaigns, and directing the movements of armies, but Richelieu had not a keen eye to detect military genius in others.

In war as in peace, he was fond of employing the clergy, and he sometimes considered martial skill in his ecclesiastical promotions. In recommending a candidate for the archbishopric of Nancy, he writes, "He is a gentleman of learning, well fitted to preach in the city, and, if need arises, able to protect it." Cardinal La Valette for some years commanded an army on the German frontier. The Archbishop of Bordeaux was admiral of the fleet, the Bishops of Mende and Nismes took an active part in the siege of La Rochelle, and these were not the only representatives of the church militant in the French service. Some of them were fair soldiers, for bishops, but these Episcopal warriors showed no genius for warfare, and the Cardinal would have been better served if he had not asked his clergy to buckle on armour over their dalmaticas.

The only one of his generals who showed any special talent was Bernard, Duke of Weimar, a high-born freebooter, who had been trained under Gustavus, and who served for pay, plunder, and glory. He was employed in the French service, and, if his wages were high, he earned them by his victories, but in 1639, when he was only thirty-six, his career was checked by death.

Not only were the leaders, for the most part, of mediocre capacity, but the armies they led were ill equipped and ill disciplined, and it is not strange that at the close of a campaign the war was generally no nearer an end than at the beginning. There are as marked differences between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries in the methods of warfare, as in the methods of travel. An army of to-day differs from one under Louis XIII. as much as a modern railroad differs from a muddy highway. The enormous armies of our age were unknown, not only because the population was smaller, but because to equip and feed such numbers of men would have been impossible. A sight of the soldiers of those days would appall a rigid disciplinarian of our time. Uniforms, which produce at least a semblance of order and discipline, were usually lacking. The captain of a company was generally allowed a fixed sum by the Government to feed and clothe his command, and the men were often ill fed and clad in rags, while the officer drew allowances not only for those in service but for soldiers who never answered to roll-call.

The letters of the time are full of complaints as

to the condition of the French troops, yet it was doubtless quite as good as that of their allies or their adversaries. Modern shortcomings, shoddy clothes or bad beef, over which so great an outcry arises, are trivial when compared with the grievances and abuses of the past. Louis himself wrote the Cardinal from the army in 1635: "There is neither money nor provisions, the soldiers are on the point of disbanding if they are not promptly provided for." "Having found neither troops nor provisions," he writes again, "I cannot advance." "For six days we could do nothing," writes a marshal, "because there was not bread enough for a third of the army." "The soldiers are begging for alms and dying of hunger," is the message from another officer. In such complaints, there was possibly some exaggeration, but there was much truth, and these conditions, if not chronic, were not infrequent.

The army was largely composed of mercenaries; the universal service of modern times was unknown, and those wars of political ambition rarely excited any patriotic fervour, which might in some degree atone for lack in military training. In the French army were found Poles, Swiss, Germans, Scotch, and men of almost every European nationality. Richelieu was in constant search of foreign mercenaries, believing they could do their work better than untrained French recruits. The Duke of Weimar had a large force of well-disciplined men in his pay, and, when he died, it was regarded as a great achievement that Louis XIII. outbid all

competitors and secured them for his own service. The chance to buy an army was watched as a modern dealer watches the chance to buy some rare collection. When the Duke of Neuburg announced his neutrality, an agent started in hot haste to purchase the soldiers whom he was about to disband. Other agents were endeavouring to buy troops of the Elector of Saxony; the military market was one of the most active in Europe.

These mercenaries were not so sparing of their blood as the Italian mercenaries centuries before, but soldiers of that sort, even if they are willing to earn their pay by an occasional fight, are rarely eager for war to end. The peace which allows the patriot to return to his home leaves the mercenary out of a job.

Another reason why years passed without important military change was that often the campaigns did not extend over more than four months, for a long campaign is only possible when food and clothing and ammunition are furnished with regularity and abundance. Moreover, in bad weather, the roads were almost impassable; the condition of Virginian roads during the American Civil War was the ordinary condition of European roads two centuries ago. When many soldiers were barefooted and all were ill equipped, when horses were lacking to draw the baggage-waggons, and pontoons were lacking to cross the rivers, only extraordinary energy could conduct an army over highways that in bad weather bore great resemblance to morasses. The campaigns were generally brief; late in the spring an

army left its winter quarters, and early in the autumn it was usually back in them.

Gustavus won his marvellous successes because he adopted new methods of warfare. When he first invaded Germany, the Austrian commander suggested at the approach of cold weather that both armies should go into winter quarters and wait comfortably for the return of summer. The Emperor heard with amazement that the Swedes made war in winter as well as in summer; and the unparalleled rapidity of his movements enabled Gustavus to accomplish more in fourteen months than his successors did in fourteen years.

The number of men put in the field by the French was large for those days. Richelieu declared to Louis that the one hundred and eighty thousand men whom he had in actual service, the two fleets at sea, and the great subsidies paid to allies, costing in all sixty million livres each year, would show to posterity the power of France during his reign. Posterity numbers its armies by millions and its expenses by milliards, but then the national wealth was not a tithe of what it is now, and these exertions were a severe strain on the resources of the country; taxation was high; the plans for commercial development, which had once engaged Richelieu's attention, were forgotten in the stress of war; if the Cardinal's administration was full of glory, it was not productive of happiness. But he was discouraged by no disaster and carried on the contest with grim and merciless tenacity. "He sacrificed," says Martin, "not without regret, but

without remorse, the generation that passes away, to the fatherland which does not pass away."

Wallenstein was murdered in February, 1634. In the next year the Swedes suffered a severe defeat at Nordlingen; twelve thousand of their men were left dead on the field of battle, and a great part of Gustavus's conquests were lost in a day. This misfortune was presently followed by the desertion of the electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, who made a separate peace with Ferdinand.

In 1636, an invasion of France by Spain threatened to bring the war to a disastrous end. The northern frontier was insufficiently protected, and in July the Spanish army pushed boldly into Picardy. They advanced rapidly, meeting with little opposition, and laying waste the country as they passed; in a few days they were less than one hundred miles from Paris; the capture of the city seemed probable and was certainly possible. No foreign army had entered Paris since the English wars, and there had been no time when it even seemed in danger since the victory of Egmont at St. Quentin; if the capital had been sacked as a result of the wars in which Richelieu had involved France, the career of the Cardinal would have ended in shame and humiliation. As the danger became imminent, the complaints grew louder; the Cardinal, it was said, had plunged the country into wars which he had not the ability to manage; he sat in his great palace, planning impossible conquests and listening to foolish comedies, while the approach to Paris was left unguarded until the enemy was at the gate. The

King was impatient of disaster, and he would have abandoned Richelieu had his policy resulted in defeat. Louis was now sullen and taciturn, and listened in silent moodiness to evil tidings from every quarter.

There were mistakes in Richelieu's policy and foibles in his character, but in great crises he showed that degree of energy and courage which awes contemporaries and attracts posterity. By his example, he inspired the King who disliked him, and the public which hated him. There was nothing in his conduct on this occasion, writes an unfriendly witness, that was not brave and grand.

Disregarding the danger from muttering groups of discontented men, he drove through the streets of Paris, attended only by a few servants, exhorting all to rally to the country's defence. His courage turned the tide; instead of an object of hatred, the Cardinal, for the time at least, was the centre about whom all gathered in the hour of national peril. Paris witnessed one of the great patriotic uprisings which have been frequent in her history. Rich and poor were stirred by the cry that the country was in danger; the Parliament agreed to equip and pay two thousand men, the city furnished four thousand, the shoe-makers' guild sent fifteen hundred, and the butchers, three thousand; every man who owned a carriage furnished one horse to mount a cavalryman; labour was in part suspended that journeymen and apprentices might go to the front, the artisan worked with fewer men, the carriages were drawn with fewer horses. The syndics of the various trades waited

upon the King to proffer their aid, and he embraced them all, even to the cobblers; the cobblers gave five thousand livres in their patriotic pride, and the other orders contributed liberally.

There had been only a few hours in which it might have been possible to capture Paris by a sudden advance; they were allowed to pass, and the opportunity did not return. Louis took the field at the head of an army of over forty thousand men, and the invaders were content to retreat unmolested and carry away their plunder in safety.

The invasion of 1636 marked the most disastrous period of the war. Although the French and their allies made slow progress, on the whole they fared better than their adversaries. In 1637, Ferdinand II. died, closing a career which had caused untold misery to the world, had laid waste a great part of Germany, and checked the material and intellectual growth of the country for a century. Though his hopes had not been fully realised, and the Edict of Restitution proved incapable of execution, the complete ascendancy of Catholicism in the hereditary dominions of the House of Austria was assured. It had been the project dearest to the Emperor's heart, he had hesitated at no means to secure that end, and he had not failed in his purpose. So his life was crowned with the success which he most desired. He was succeeded by his son, Ferdinand III., his superior in humanity and his inferior in strength of will.

Ferdinand's death produced little effect. Except some victories which Bernard of Weimar won for

his employers, there were no important successes on either side. With ill-equipped armies, inefficient generals, and brief campaigns, the contest dragged along, and neither party could force its adversary to terms.

Yet, as the years went by, both Spain and the Empire showed increasing signs of weakness. With Spain especially the strain of a long war, for which she was ill prepared, resulted in a slow process of disintegration. Under Philip II., Portugal had been annexed to the Crown of Castille. But no efforts had been made to reconcile the people of that kingdom to their new lot; they were plundered by the exactions of Spanish viceroys; their commerce diminished; their merchant ships were exposed to the ravages of pirates; official positions were sold to foreigners, and the country suffered under every form of Spanish misrule.

When the forces of Spain were engaged in war against France and Holland, the Portuguese saw the opportunity to regain their national existence. In 1640, an insurrection broke out, and the Duke of Braganza, the heir of former rulers, was proclaimed King of Portugal. The liberation of the Portuguese was accomplished almost without resistance; the Spanish were hated by all, and they were destitute of any means with which to resist a popular movement. In a few weeks, the whole of Portugal was freed from Spanish garrisons, the ancient monarchy was re-established and was not again to become subject to foreign rule.

A revolt of hardly less importance threatened the

power of Spain in another part of her wide possessions. Catalonia, at the eastern extremity of the Pyrenees and adjoining Languedoc, was inhabited by a hardy and vigorous population. Long ruled by the counts of Barcelona, it had been annexed to Aragon as a result of marriage alliances. The province still enjoyed many privileges, which, if they had been respected, would have preserved its character as a free, and almost an independent State. But the Spanish were loath to respect the privileges of any possessions which came under their rule; during the reign of Philip IV., soldiers were quartered in Catalonia, the people were treated with brutality, their rights disregarded, and their property plundered. Olivarez wrote the viceroy with the misdirected energy of despotism:

"If you do not oblige the people to bring on their backs all the wheat, barley, and straw that is found, you will fail in what you owe to God, your King, and the blood in your veins. If the privileges of the province do not interfere with what you have to do, it were well to conform to them, but, if they cause delay, were it but for an hour, he is an enemy to his country who will yield to them."

It is by such measures that Spain has succeeded in dissipating a great foreign empire.

In 1640, Catalonia and Roussillon declared themselves independent of the Spanish Crown, and, in the following year, they were united to France by a treaty which guaranteed their privileges and rights. The people were weary of misrule and welcomed

the change, but the Spanish sought to hold by arms what they had lost by bad government, while the French made vigorous efforts to secure these new and valuable possessions. In 1641, they laid siege to Tarragona, and the Spanish fleet endeavoured to relieve the town. The French ships were under the command of the Archbishop of Bordeaux; an engagement followed in which the French had the worst of it, and the siege was raised.

Richelieu had a curious weakness for ecclesiastical warriors, but his heart was set on the capture of Tarragona, and his wrath overflowed on the unlucky bishop. He was removed from his command, and the Cardinal was not content with this. He wished the admiral to be further punished, but he found himself involved in curious complications. Other unsuccessful officers he committed to the tender mercy of a court-martial selected by himself, but an archbishop could not be tried and sentenced by lay-admirals and captains. Richelieu turned to the Pope for relief, and asked for the appointment of a court of bishops to try the offender. In the extremity of his wrath, the Cardinal lost his usual good judgment, and the Pope did not see fit to designate half a dozen bishops, who should consider the errors of their right reverend brother in the management of a fleet. Richelieu was forced to content himself with keeping the archbishop in disgrace, forbidden either to walk the quarter-deck, or to officiate in his cathedral. The flock may have suffered, but the sailors fared better when commanded by a sailor than by a priest.

This defeat was only temporary and was followed by victories which secured to France the possession of the revolting provinces. In 1642, the important city of Perpignan was besieged. The Spanish sought to bring relief, and in June the remains of a navy, which under Charles V. had been the most powerful in Europe, met the fleet that Richelieu within a few years had created for France. The Spanish had fifty men-of-war and ten galleys. The French had forty ships and twenty galleys. The Spanish were completely defeated and sought shelter at Port Mahon, and this disaster entailed the loss of Roussillon. Perpignan surrendered, the entire province fell into the hands of the French, and French it has ever since remained. Catalonia was also overrun by the French armies, and when Richelieu died there was every reason to believe that the wish of the people would be gratified and the province become part of the French kingdom.

In the Low Countries, also, the Spanish lost ground. In 1640, the important city of Arras was taken. Its strength was great; it was a virgin town, never polluted by the presence of victorious enemies, and the citizens felt the confidence which comes from long immunity. "When the French take Arras, the rats will eat the cats," so ran the popular apothegm. But after a long siege the city was forced to surrender; it became and has remained a French possession.

Richelieu espoused the cause of Holland, whose long war with Spain recommenced at the expiration of the twelve years' truce. In this he followed the

traditions of Henry IV. and pursued a policy which was not departed from until Louis XIV. alienated those allies by his over-weening pride, to his great and permanent loss. By this alliance the Cardinal hoped to secure greater results than the formal acknowledgment of Dutch independence, which was already practically assured. The provinces which now constitute Belgium were to be freed from the Spanish yoke; and that the liberators might not be without reward, France and Holland were to receive territorial compensation, while if the people remained constant to Spain the entire territory was to be conquered and divided. This was the contingency which would have been most agreeable to Richelieu. Holland was to take Brabant, Guelders, and other provinces, while for France the Cardinal selected Hainault, Artois, Namur, Luxembourg, part of Flanders, and the cities of Gravelines, Dunkirk, and Ostend.

This project of partition was not alluring to the Dutch burghers; they were not eager to extend their boundaries by the reception of Catholic provinces into their commonwealth, and they had no desire to see their powerful ally too near a neighbour. They felt safer with the most of Belgium held by a decaying state like Spain, rather than by a vigorous and encroaching people like the French.

Richelieu was greatly interested in this scheme. His letters contain frequent memoranda on the subject and suggest methods by which it could be brought to a successful accomplishment. It had to encounter, however, not only the passive opposition

of the Dutch, but the active opposition of the inhabitants of the Spanish Low Countries, whose lot it was sought to change. The Spanish had learned moderation from the loss of the United Provinces, and their rule in the Low Countries was now an easy one. There was no general well-being among the French people to tempt those who already enjoyed a moderate prosperity to share their lot. A few ambitious politicians hoped to find their advantage in French rule, but by the masses of the people the prospect of it was viewed with apprehension.

Although the Cardinal was unable to carry these plans into execution, yet, to a certain extent, they were realised under Louis XIV. Artois, Dunkirk, Gravelines, and parts of Hainault and Flanders were, at one time and another, annexed to France and have remained French.

It soon became evident that the Spanish were ready to concede the independence of the Seven Provinces and to yield most of the commercial advantages which they demanded. The independence of the United Provinces had been practically assured for forty years, and the time had at last come when the Spanish saw they must recognise the fact or risk the possessions which still remained faithful to their allegiance. The Dutch became lax in their alliance with the French, and a powerful party, jealous of French interference, insisted that the provinces should accept reasonable terms, and not continue a war to obtain territories for themselves of which they had no need, and territories for France which would be a peril to their own safety.

The Dutch continued in the French alliance until after Richelieu's death, but not very much was done in the way of fighting. At the congress at Münster and Osnabrück, it was soon ascertained that the Dutch were ready to make peace without waiting for France, and in 1648 the war between Spain and the Seven Provinces was ended by the formal acknowledgment of Dutch independence. Not until twelve years later were France and Spain able to agree on terms.

While Sweden was carrying on the war in Germany, and France was engaged in the Low Countries and the Spanish possessions, negotiations for peace began. The council by which the Thirty Years' War was brought to an end proceeded with as much deliberation as the contest itself. As early as 1636, it was decided to call a council at Cologne by which the great war might be closed. It was convened under the sanction of the Pope, and in 1639, Mazarin, who had just become a French citizen, was chosen as the representative of France. But years elapsed before the first meeting of the body; not until 1644 did the representatives of the various nations assemble at Münster, which had finally been selected as the place of meeting.

Richelieu entertained little hope that these endeavours for peace would meet with immediate success. Austria and Spain were not sufficiently exhausted to accede to the terms demanded by the allies, and it required the victories of Condé and Turenne to obtain for France the advantages which she sought. By the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648

almost the whole of Alsace was ceded to France; the acquisitions she made at the expense of Spain were not secured until the Spanish abandoned a hopeless struggle eleven years later. The genius of the great French generals and the sagacity of Mazarin contributed to these results, but they followed the policy which Richelieu had outlined, and the terms of the treaties were such as he would have desired.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CLOSE OF RICHELIEU'S CAREER

1638–1642

ONLY Richelieu's indomitable energy enabled him to bear the anxiety of a great and protracted war in addition to his other labours, and amid the perils by which he was environed. He was not only prime minister, but minister of war, of the navy, and of foreign affairs. And all these duties he undertook when a great war was waging, when taxation was burdensome and discontent was rife.

He gave attention to every detail of military operations. We find his directions concerning the furnishing of supplies, the character of the food, and matters that would now be the affair of the quartermaster or the commissary-general. There are also plans of battles drawn by him, with the arrangement of the troops, the order in which they should march, the distances at which they should be placed. "Between the advance-guard and the line of battle," he writes, "there should be three hundred feet;

between the line and the rear-guard, six hundred feet," and so on, marking out the place of each regiment with more precision than is often shown by a general in command. He traced the plans for fortresses and for camps, and calculated the way in which an army could best be transported across a stream; thus he employed a mind that could never rest, and indulged his fondness for the profession which as a youth he had hoped to follow.

Such instructions did not always reach the front. Perhaps they were not intended for actual use, but the minister who with reluctance intrusted any detail of government to another, was certain to regulate the plans of a campaign from the home office. This Richelieu did, and the army fared none the better for it. He was often unfortunate in his generals, because he wished to give the command to those whom he regarded with personal favour, and believed that any defects in their experience or capacity could be supplied from Paris.

The war was long and its fortunes varied. After Gustavus's death, success for a while inclined to the side of Austria, but in the closing years of Richelieu's administration the great armies he had collected and the millions he annually expended began to produce the effects for which he hoped.

During this period France enjoyed for the most part internal tranquillity. If the country had been distracted by frequent insurrection, as it was in the early years of the reign of Louis XIII., it would have been impossible to carry on war against Austria and Spain with the vigour necessary for success.

After La Rochelle had been captured and the leaders of some abortive insurrections punished with merciless severity, the Cardinal believed he could safely undertake a great foreign war. His policy from the beginning was to insure order at home, that France might exert a great influence abroad, yet all his efforts did not secure complete tranquillity.

The revolts organised by unsuccessful intriguers, or dissatisfied nobles, were of no great importance, but discontent was widespread among the mass of the people, and might have proved dangerous under a less vigorous ruler. Like many other great statesmen, Richelieu was a poor financier. The financial system of the country was bad, and he did little to improve it. A long war was not an opportune season for financial reforms, and the evils of vicious taxation were aggravated by the increasing needs of the Government.

Richelieu was not a corrupt minister, but he was prodigal. Henry IV., with all his dashing qualities, had in his character a good deal of the prudent bourgeois; he loved to save his sous. Under him taxation was light, and there was a surplus in the treasury. Richelieu found himself involved in wars where strict economy was impossible, and he had neither the art nor even the desire to conduct the Government as cheaply as possible. If there was a thing to do, he wished it done at once regardless of the cost. Lavishness was agreeable to him in private life, and this was not without its influence on his public conduct. He writes: " We must not complain about money; money is nothing if we accomplish our end. . . .

Only God can make something out of nothing. Even extortions which are intolerable in their nature become excusable from the necessities of war."

Such were the views of a prime minister who knew little about financial questions, and who, with a bad system of taxation and a corrupt and insufficient administration, was carrying on war with half of Europe and supporting six armies in the field. It is not strange that the budget grew larger and that the condition of the taxpayer grew worse. In 1610, under Henry IV., the *taille* yielded twelve millions; during the regency of Mary de' Medici it reached seventeen millions; before the close of Richelieu's administration the amount collected was almost forty-four millions.

The burden of taxation excited many petty revolts. They were usually small affairs, a few officials were hanged by the mob, and many malcontents were hanged by the authorities. However unwise and ineffectual, these risings proved that poverty and suffering among the people were only too common under Richelieu. We read of insurrections of peasants in Limousin and Poitou, in Gascony and Guyenne, always excited by over-taxation, always begun in the vain attempt to resist the imposition of new taxes or to shake off the burden of old taxes. "I fear," said an orator of the States-General in 1614, "that these excessive burdens and the oppression from which the people suffer will drive them to despair." Under Richelieu the burdens were heavier than before, and it was despair which drove an ignorant peasantry into hopeless rebellion.

Only once did such a rising assume proportions of importance. Richelieu's endeavours to destroy the remnants of local government in France had increased his unpopularity; the remnants were not very important, but the people were loath to surrender them. In Normandy, the local States once possessed considerable power; under Richelieu their meetings became infrequent and their authority was diminished. The people were strongly attached to this institution, and the efforts to destroy it increased the discontent caused by onerous taxation. After three years of enforced vacation, the States met in 1638 and submitted to the King a sinister picture of the condition of the country. Commerce was ruined, they said, by unwise taxation, the land ravaged by disorderly soldiers, the prisons filled by those who could not pay their taxes, villages deserted and farms laid waste. The picture was exaggerated, but the condition of the people was bad enough. A hopeless revolt against a powerful government was not likely to improve their lot, but a discontented people is not often reasonable and, in 1639, Normandy was in open insurrection. It presented the usual features of the popular risings, of which there were many in French history, for the most part due, as was this, to the misery caused by excessive taxation. Furious mobs destroyed property, burned houses and barns, and hanged unpopular officials. They were organised into a semi-military body, of which the leader came to be known as "Barefooted John." He was the vicar of the church at Avranches. The inferior clergy were not only in

close sympathy with the people, but the pay was so meagre that their lot was often little better than that of the poorest of their flock. Under the leadership of Barefooted John a force gathered, which soon counted twenty thousand men, and took the appropriate title of the Army of Suffering. As is usually the case, they looked back to a period when they believed the people's lot was happier, and they demanded the repeal of all taxes that had been imposed since the death of Henry IV. The French people long turned to the reign of the hero of Ivry as an era of happiness and well-being, and in this they were not wholly wrong.

The Army of Suffering proceeded after the fashion of similar risings. The buildings occupied by the tax officers or for the storage of grain were special objects of execration, and many of them were sacked and burned. The conduct of the insurgents, as was truly said, was both ferocious and absurd, but what else could have been expected? They received encouragement from those higher in the social scale; the Parliament showed little zeal in repressing disorder, while the citizens of Rouen and other towns indulged in similar excesses. The authorities ordered the bourgeois to assist in quelling disturbances. "We have no arms" was the general reply; "we have sold our weapons in order to raise money with which to pay our taxes."

This condition of lawlessness continued for several weeks. The Cardinal was greatly incensed, and vented his wrath on the officials, who had imposed some unpopular taxes in the endeavour to raise

money with which to meet the ever-increasing demands of the treasury. "You had better think what you are doing," he wrote, "and consider the consequences of the resolutions you adopt in your council of finance."

If Richelieu abused his associates, he was not the man to allow rebellion to go unchecked. All were made to feel the weight of the Cardinal's hand. A regular army was sent to the province, and the insurgents were soon dispersed, leaders were executed on the gallows or broken on the wheel, and their followers sent to the galleys; the sessions of the Parliament were suspended for a year, the towns were deprived of their franchises, an enormous fine was imposed on Rouen, and order again reigned in Normandy.

This ineffectual rebellion was soon followed by another, which proved no more successful. The Cardinal was loved neither by peer nor peasant, and the failure of past efforts to overthrow his rule did not prevent new attempts. In 1641, the Count of Soissons, a prince of the blood, both able and powerful, started a fresh rebellion, with the Duke of Bouillon and other great noblemen among his followers. Their pronunciamento contained the oft-repeated complaints against the Cardinal. Richelieu, so said the insurgents in their appeal for support, had imperilled the reputation of the King, squandered the money of the State, and spilled the blood of the people in wars, the only object of which was to insure his own grasp on power; he had banished, imprisoned, and executed, he had risked

a schism that he might become the head of the Church; the laws were violated, the privileges of the nobility disregarded, the clergy illegally taxed, to support corsairs on the sea who robbed innocent men under the command of an archbishop, and soldiers on land who pillaged churches under the command of a cardinal. It was to free the land from such ills that the people of France were bidden to rise.

There were many who believed these charges against Richelieu to be not wholly unjust, but if they did not love the Cardinal, they feared that those who sought to replace him would squander French blood and treasure with even worse results. Though the insurgents met with little popular support, yet no other insurrection seems to have excited so much apprehension in Richelieu; he was growing old, and his health was broken after years of enormous responsibility and toil. Success did not fail him at the last; the royal army was defeated, chiefly because the Cardinal saw fit to confide it to an incompetent leader, but the Count of Soissons was killed in the hour of his victory. "We must take the bitter with the sweet," said the Cardinal, when he was told of the defeat of his army and the death of his enemy. There was more sweet than bitter, for the death of Soissons put an end to the insurrection.

The dangers to which Richelieu was exposed were not yet ended; they ceased only when the Cardinal was no more. He did not spare his enemies, and it is not strange that they were willing to sacrifice him, but all the schemes for assassination came to nothing.

It was often decided that the Cardinal must be killed, but no one ever raised his hand to make the attempt.

Twice, indeed, he was in serious danger, and on both occasions it was the King's brother, Gaston of Orleans, who was to give the signal, at which his followers were to bury their daggers in Richelieu's heart. On both occasions Gaston's courage failed him in the hour of action. If any compunction had seized him, any unwillingness to shed the blood of a defenceless man, this might be reckoned to his credit; but as no motive controlled his action save physical timidity, there is no need to applaud pusillanimity.

A special interest attaches to the last conspiracy formed against Richelieu; it was at the close of his long administration, and he gained his victory over his enemies when the hand of death was upon him. The conspiracy of Cinq-Mars has been celebrated in prose and verse; it is familiar to many who know little of Richelieu's career. The man who sought to overthrow and at last to murder the Cardinal owed his first advancement to Richelieu's favour. He was, indeed, used by the minister as a means of getting rid of an objectionable favourite. When Louis's affections were diverted to Mlle. de La Fayette, Mlle. de Hautefort remained in the service of the Queen. Mlle. de La Fayette presently retired to the pious isolation of the Convent of the Visitation, and Louis continued to meet his former charmer; she had passed from girlhood to womanhood and had grown more beautiful with years, and

the King soon contracted a new passion for her, as chaste and as fretful as his early affection.

If Mlle. de Hautefort had advanced in years, she had lost nothing of her youthful independence, and Richelieu was unable by any bribes to make her his friend. Of her real sentiments he was kept well posted. In every branch of the Government he had his spies; doubtless they were required for the success of his plans, and perhaps for the safety of his person, but it is not agreeable to think of the great statesman listening in the secrecy of his chamber to the treacherous disclosures of ladies and gentlemen who sold themselves to him. It is sad to find that in the household of the Queen he had suborned a young lady of good family, young, beautiful, witty, and spirituelle, who disclosed to him the inmost feelings and the secret councils of the Queen, her mistress, and of the ladies of the Court, her friends. The Cardinal had no compunction in using such confidences; they assured him of Mlle. de Hautefort's hostility, and he resolved to destroy her influence over Louis by the only sure means,—banishment from his sight. The task was not an easy one, but the Cardinal demanded the removal of the offending favourite, and at last he obtained an order from Louis that she should leave the Court for fifteen days. Mlle. de Hautefort was outraged by this affront and retired to the country, nor did she return to the scene of these ignoble cabals until Cardinal and King were no more.

It was necessary to supply the place she left vacant, for Louis required some one as a confidant

and companion. Weary of the wiles of women, Richelieu selected for the position a young man named Cinq-Mars, the son of Marshal d'Effiat. The Cardinal might reasonably expect the good-will of the new favourite; he had befriended his father and procured for the son the opportunity of advancement. Cinq-Mars was, moreover, a youth of much vanity and little ability, and could not be regarded as a possible rival to the all-powerful Cardinal, the foremost man of Europe, who had grown grey in the service of the State.

But the character of Louis XIII. exposed the minister to strange perils. The King's feelings toward a favourite of either sex seem to have been much the same; he paid to either the same jealous and wearisome devotion, and he insisted on an intimacy which gave the confidant every opportunity to instil his own views into the royal mind. Cinq-Mars was handsome, and of pleasing manners, and his favour grew apace.

"We have a new favourite at Court," Chavigni writes Mazarin in 1639, "M. de Cinq-Mars, dependent entirely on the Cardinal. . . . Never has the King had a passion for anyone more violent than for him. He is the Grand Equerry of France, which is not a bad début for a youth of nineteen."

He found serious trials in his master's temperament. The quarrels, the poutings, the little alienations and speedy reconciliations with a king almost forty years old seem indeed strange. Cinq-Mars's conduct was not unnatural; he was a conceited boy,

puffed up by great prosperity, who dreamed of supplanting Richelieu, but at the same time was eager for his own pleasures, and bored by the dulness of constantly attending on a stupid, middle-aged, and melancholy king. He might have learned the courtier's arts from the Cardinal he sought to displace. Though Richelieu's chief hold was in Louis's conviction of his capacity, yet the minister flattered his capricious master with unceasing care. However certain that his views would be adopted, they were submitted to the King with entire deference. But his young rival seemed to think that as his favour rested on nothing, it could never grow less. After a weary day spent with the King, Cinq-Mars would gallop over to Paris for the delights of the Marais and the society of Marion de Lorme. Such adventures often made him irritable during the following day; his moral and thrifty master condemned his vices as reprehensible and his amusements as extravagant. The bickerings of the King and the favourite were submitted to the minister with as much solicitude as the latest bulletins from Roussillon or Arras, and were studied by him with fully as much care. "I was a little ill last night," writes the King to the Cardinal, "so this morning I took a remedy, and to-night perhaps I shall take some medicine. The certificate enclosed will show the condition of the reconciliation you made yesterday." The certificate is in these words:

"We, the undersigned, certify to whom it may concern, that we are well contented and satisfied with each other and have never been in such perfect intelligence as

CINQ-MARS.

FROM A PAINTING BY LENAIN.

now. In witness whereof we have signed this certificate. Dated at St. Germain, November 26, 1639.

"(Signed)

"LOUIS. CINQ-MARS.

This is not the only one of such documents that form part of the State papers. Louis's actual quarrels with his favourite were reduced to writing, as well as his imaginary reasonings with his lady-loves. We find this certificate, duly signed by both parties:

"To-day, the 9th of May, 1640, the King being at Soissons, his Majesty has seen fit to promise Monsieur le Grand, that during all this campaign he will not be angry with him. If M. le Grand should give him some slight cause, the complaint shall be made by his Majesty to the Cardinal without bitterness, that by his advice M. le Grand may correct himself of all that may displease the King."

But the bickerings were never ending. In January, 1641, the King writes Richelieu:

"I am vexed to weary you with the bad humours of M. le Grand. I said to him on his return from Rueil, 'the Cardinal writes me you desire to please me in all things, but you do not in one respect and that is your indolence.' He answered me that he could not change, and could do no better than he had. I was offended by this. . . . I resumed the conversation on idleness, saying that it rendered a man incapable of all good things, that he was only fit for the Marais, and if he wished to continue that mode of life he could return there. He told me arrogantly he was quite ready to give up his wealth and as willing to be plain Cinq-Mars as M.

le Grand, and as for changing his fashion of life, he could not do it. I finally told him that I would be pleased not to see him in this humour. He answered that he would willingly attend to that. All this took place in the presence of Gordes. I have shown Gordes this memoir before sending it to you, and he tells me there is nothing in it which is not correct."

Such fits of petulance on the part of the favourite did not permanently loosen his hold on his master. Louis complained, reproved, sulked, wrote budgets of his grievances for the consideration of the officers of State, but he remained dependent on the companionship of his youthful comrade. Though Cinq-Mars would not sacrifice the caprice or the anger of the moment, he still cherished his foolish dreams of ambition. He wished to have his nights of pleasure in Paris, splendour and profusion around him, the jests of his friends and the smiles of his lady-loves, and he did not wish to be bored by Louis's society more than was necessary; but he desired also to control the King's policy as well as his affection, and to become a Luines instead of a Saint Simon.

The practical sense, which Louis did not entirely lose in all his remarkable philanderings, discouraged these hopes. The King was willing to listen to Cinq-Mars's complaints of the Cardinal, but he always answered that Richelieu was indispensable to the State. The minister soon discovered that his protégé was ungrateful as well as incapable, and took no pains to conceal his contempt for him. Cinq-Mars had formed the habit of accompanying the King, even when he conferred with Richelieu,

or attended meetings of the council. The Cardinal bore this for a while, but at last he poured out his wrath on the favourite. Cinq-Mars possessed, so Richelieu told him with more truth than politeness, neither wit nor ability; not only was his attendance, when matters of State were to be discussed, an impertinence, but the presence of such an imbecile at meetings of the council was sufficient to destroy the reputation of the ministry and make it the laughing-stock of Europe. Cinq-Mars retired after this outburst to shed tears of wrath, but he was obliged to obey. He attended no more meetings of the council, and sought consolation in plots to destroy his enemy.

If the Cardinal could expel his rival from the council chamber, he could not displace him in the King's affection. Richelieu was becoming old and his health was more than usually infirm; in the duel between him and his young competitor, the opinion of the Court was divided as to the final success. Richelieu's enemies might have tranquilly awaited his death, which was not far off, but he had so often disappointed them by rising from what they hoped was his death-bed, that they were not inclined to wait for Providence to rid them of him. Cinq-Mars was in frequent conference with Gaston and other enemies of the Cardinal, and the advisability of murdering Richelieu was considered. A gentleman named Fontrailles said that if Gaston would give his consent, he could easily find those who would dispose of the enemy. Gaston was afraid to consent to anything, and yet he was pleased with any plan that would rid them of the odious minister; it was

decided that it might be necessary to kill the Cardinal, but they reached no definite conclusion as to how and when the deed should be done. It seemed desirable to have some city where the conspirators could retire if necessary, and the place chosen was the strong city of Sedan, which was independent of the French King, and of which the Duke of Bouillon was sovereign. Bouillon declared they must have a treaty with Spain, so that she might furnish an army for their assistance in time of need. Save empty promises, they had little to offer Spain for her aid, but the Spanish minister was always willing to take any steps that might embroil the internal affairs of France.

Fontrailles was accordingly sent to Spain in the winter of 1642, with power to negotiate a treaty. He reached Madrid about the 1st of March, and met the Count of Olivarez, who governed Spain with the authority but not the ability of Richelieu. The Count was so infirm that when he walked his chin almost touched his knees, and to conceal his condition he remained seated during the interviews, dangling his rosary in his hands, and talking a good deal of nonsense. He had enough sagacity to know that Gaston was a coward and a useless confederate, but when he found that the powerful Duke of Bouillon and Cinq-Mars, the King's favourite, were ready to enter into a secret treaty against their country, he saw the possibility of advantage for Spain. Accordingly, in March, 1642, a treaty was signed by which the Spanish agreed to furnish the confederates seventeen thousand men, and to pay Gaston four

hundred thousand crowns in cash, and twelve thousand crowns a month as pension. No peace was to be made except by the consent of all, and any places they might capture in France were only to be surrendered when she yielded all that she had taken from Spain during the war. The men who professed to take up arms against the misrule of the Cardinal promptly agreed that France should surrender all the conquests which he had won for her. Fontrailles returned from Madrid with his dangerous secret, and the treaty was delivered to Gaston.

In the meantime the intrigues of the Court continued their course. In January, 1642, the King started for the South, accompanied both by the minister and the favourite, to take part in the campaign in Catalonia. The Cardinal's health so entirely failed him that he was obliged at last to abandon the expedition. Attacked by fever in March, suffering from abscesses so that he was unable to sign his name, he was left at Narbonne, while the King, on April 22nd, departed for the siege of Perpignan. For over two months the Cardinal lay in great pain and in danger alike of loss of life and loss of power. Though still exerting some degree of control from his sick-bed, he felt his position to be precarious. The Court was filled with reports that his power was so shaken, that even should he rally from the disorders that were killing him, his influence over Louis was irretrievably lost. It seemed impossible that Richelieu's energy could much longer keep life in so shattered a frame, but his great vitality had withstood many attacks of

disease, and the plotters still considered the necessity of violence in order to remove him from the scene.

Cinq-Mars had now exclusive possession of the King's ear, and he made every endeavour to poison his mind against the minister. He even proceeded so far as to suggest his murder, if disease should not dispose of him; the King replied that they would suffer excommunication for assassinating a priest and a cardinal. A gentleman offered to go to Rome and obtain absolution, but the King would not wholly desert the man whom he still believed to be the support of his fortunes. Negotiations looking towards a peace were carried on with Spain by Cinq-Mars, writing under the King's authority, but the fatal treaty of March, utterly neglected even by those who made it, was never brought to Louis's knowledge.

The followers of the favourite styled themselves royalists, and stigmatised as cardinalists those who clung to the fortunes of Richelieu. The King one day accosted a captain, a man destined afterwards to be the first bourgeois marshal of France, and said to him: "They tell me my army is divided into two factions, the royalists and the cardinalists; to which do you belong?" "I am a cardinalist," the captain promptly replied, qualifying his brusqueness by adding, "the Cardinal's party is your party."

In the meantime, Richelieu had somewhat rallied from his illness, and on May 27th he left Narbonne and proceeded towards Provence, apparently uncertain as to his destination and as to the treatment he

might expect from the King. But his star was again in the ascendancy, and shrewd courtiers now foretold the overthrow of the presumptuous and indiscreet favourite. Louis was weary of the campaign in Catalonia, and annoyed by Cinq-Mars's incapacity. The King's favourites found him most critical when they sought to take part in military affairs. Louis was displeased with Cinq-Mars's ignorance as a soldier, as he had been with that of Luines, and he began to weary of his follower.

Late in May, the French sustained a severe defeat at Honnecourt, and it seemed for a moment as if the disasters of the Corbie campaign might be renewed. But the King declared that his confidence in the Cardinal was unshaken. "Whatever false reports they spread," he wrote Richelieu, "I love you more than ever. We have been too long together ever to be separated."

At this critical moment the great discovery was made which was to overthrow the last cabal against the minister. A copy of the treaty made with Spain in March came into the Cardinal's possession. How this treaty was disclosed still remains a secret. It has been suggested that the Queen or some of Gaston's attendants may have betrayed the plot; Orleans was surrounded with men like unto himself; his chief adviser was the Abbé de la Rivière, who was capable of any treachery. But Richelieu had everywhere an admirable force of spies, and it is not improbable that he obtained a copy of the document through a secret emissary in Spain.

The wonder is not so much how the treaty was

discovered, as that it remained a secret so long. The conspirators were numerous, reckless, and indiscreet. Fontrailles had been dismayed on his return to find the existence of the treaty known not only to the Queen and De Thou, but to many others. Cinq-Mars's secrets had been poorly kept; largely, perhaps, because he could not keep them himself.

The prudent Fontrailles insisted on flying when he saw that the grand equerry was in peril of losing, not only his favour, but his life. "You," he said to Cinq-Mars, "are so large and well made that you do not care about losing your head, but I am small and short, and I should look deformed without mine." He therefore fled to England, and returned in safety after Richelieu's death, but Cinq-Mars stayed with the King regardless of warnings.

The treaty, under which nothing had been done, was not a thing fraught with much danger to the State, but it delivered the enemies of Richelieu into his hands. A copy was received by him about the 8th or 9th of June, and he at once sent Chavigni with it to the King. Louis had just left the siege of Perpignan, and met Chavigni at Narbonne on June 12th. There the treaty was laid before him, with such proof as could be furnished of its genuineness and of Cinq-Mars's complicity, who was at once taken into custody, together with the amiable and imprudent De Thou, a son of the great French historian and an intimate friend of the ill-fated favourite. The Duke of Bouillon was in Italy in command of the French army, and he also was forthwith arrested and brought to France.

The other conspirator was the King's brother, and he had to be dealt with more carefully. There was no thought of punishing him with severity, but he was relied on to turn State's evidence and secure the conviction of his associates. He had so often played this part, that there could be little doubt of his willingness to repeat it, but on this occasion his conduct had been characterised by unusual turpitude, and to assist in bringing to the block those who had relied upon him was an act of special baseness. On June 25th, he found that a copy of the treaty was in Richelieu's hands, and he forthwith sent his agent to negotiate his peace. The terms imposed were simple. Gaston must give legal proof of the existence of the treaty and the complicity of his associates; if his evidence were full and sufficient, he would himself be pardoned and be allowed to retire to Venice with a pension of twelve thousand crowns a month, being, as it was maliciously stated, the amount he was to receive from the King of Spain.

He was in great distress, and sent the most piteous letters. "I must be relieved from the pain I am in," he writes Chavigni. "Twice you have helped me with his Eminence. I swear this shall be the last time I will give you such employment." Finally, his agent said that if the King would allow Gaston to retire to Blois instead of to Venice, and to continue in the enjoyment of all the emoluments he received from the Crown, he would make a full confession. The bargain was closed and Gaston thereupon signed his confession, in which he declared that he had been seduced by Cinq-Mars into

plots against the Cardinal; that they, with the Duke of Bouillon, had agreed to make a treaty with Spain, and to enter France with a hostile army while the King was at Perpignan, and that he had twice spoken with De Thou about the matter. He protested that he had never lent ear or heart to any design against the Cardinal's person. "All my life," he said, "I have held in horror such damnable thoughts against anyone, and much more against a life so precious and sacred, which I pray God may long be preserved to France."

On June 28th, the King visited the Cardinal at Tarascon, and they met again after their two months' separation. Both were such invalids that their beds were placed side by side, and thus their conference was held. Louis feared Richelieu's reproaches, as a truant schoolboy fears his teacher's; but the Cardinal was profuse only in gratitude and devotion. Greatly cheered by this, the King, after assuring the minister of his confidence and affection, returned to St. Germain.

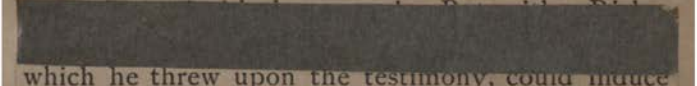
Though the King had been prompt in ordering the arrest of Cinq-Mars, it was feared that he might relent, and his resentment was carefully kept alive. On the 4th of August, Louis published and sent to the parliaments, chief cities, and foreign ambassadors a statement of his relations with the late favourite, prepared by Richelieu, and containing strange confessions for a king. In it he said:

"The notable change in M. de Cinq-Mars for a year decided us to watch his words and actions, that we might discover the cause. For this end we resolved to let him

talk with us more freely than before. . . . We discovered that one of his chief desires was to blame the acts of our dear cousin, the Cardinal Duke of Richelieu. . . . He was favourable to those whom we regarded unfavourably, and hostile to those who served us best. . . . The interest of our state, which has always been dearer than life, obliged us to seize his person."

Louis then announced the pardon granted Gaston on condition of his confession, and the steps taken against the others.

At Lyons, the court sat for the trial of the conspirators. It had been specially organised for the duty, as was done in most trials for political offences, but the guilt of the offenders was so easily proved that there was little necessity for packing the court. The only serious trouble was in reference to the presentation of the evidence. The law required that the witnesses in criminal cases should



which he threw upon the testimony, could induce Gaston to subject himself to this indignity and to meet face to face the comrades whom he was bringing to the block. The difficulty was solved by the opinion of the advocate-general that one of the blood royal of France need not be confronted with the accused on a trial for high treason, and that a deposition signed by him would be received by the court. Thus protected from the gaze of his unhappy associates, Gaston gave his evidence cheerfully, and he could without at all exaggerating the facts prove that all parties, himself included, had

sought the aid of a hostile country against their own Government, and were guilty of high treason. De Thou sought to escape death by proving that he had taken no part in the treaty, and that his only offence was his failure to disclose it, but the court was not organised to grant mercy; Cinq-Mars was unanimously condemned to death, De Thou received the same penalty, with only one or two dissenting voices.

The punishment was deserved, and any plea for leniency would have been useless. Richelieu was a relentless man, and he grew no more merciful as his end drew near. A willingness to forgive is often found in exalted characters, but he did not possess it. He could truly assert that his enemies were the enemies of the State, that those who plotted his death had made treaties with Spain and promised that France should be stripped of her conquests.

[redacted]

plotted against him plotted against his country. It might have been pleaded in mitigation, that the plots of such men as Cinq-Mars were sure to come to naught, and the Cardinal could have treated prostrate foes with contempt, instead of sending them to the block. But he could have replied to such arguments that a man's being a fool was no reason that he should be pardoned for being a knave. "I have been severe to some," he said in his testament, "in order to be good to others. . . . I have loved justice and not vengeance." This was his own vindication, and it was well founded.

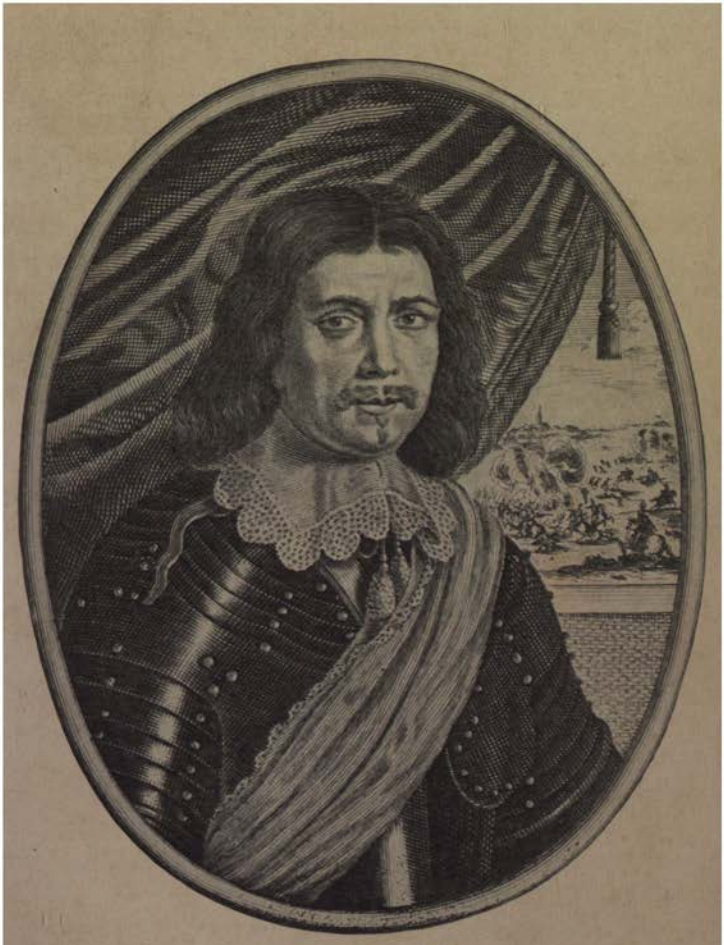
Punishment followed close on judgment; the court met to pass sentence on the morning of September 12th, and on the afternoon of the same day the condemned were taken to the scaffold. Executions were regarded as a pleasing spectacle by persons of all ranks, and in this case the prominence of the parties and the nature of their offence lent a special poignancy to the tragedy. The prisoners were surrounded by so dense a crowd that it was with difficulty the carriage could make its way to the principal square of the city. This was thronged by a great mass of people, and every window and roof of the houses and shops surrounding the square was crowded with spectators. Women as well as men, ladies of the Court and criminals escaped from jail, watched the scene with the same interest.

The prisoners met death calmly and piously, singing hymns and reciting litanies as they were carried to the place of execution. "We shall efface our sins by suffering brief infamy and conquer Heaven by a little shame," said De Thou to his companion, speaking, according to a listener, with the tone and voice, not of a preacher, but of a seraphim. As Cinq-Mars mounted the scaffold he saluted the vast crowd with smiles of a charming sweetness, and then prepared for death with equal grace and devotion. De Thou followed him with the same firmness, although an observer says—for the public was critical in such matters,—that Cinq-Mars met his end with a little more of cavalier grace. The lives of such men were often full of folly, but their social training gave them repose of manner, and a certain

fortitude of mind which enabled them to meet death with marvellous tranquillity. Similar spectacles were often seen during the Revolution. Gentlemen, whose lives had been neither useful nor edifying, faced ruin with calmness and met death with a bow, a smile, and a prayer.

The Duke of Bouillon escaped the punishment of his associates because he was able to pay a great ransom. The strong city of Sedan still constituted an independent sovereignty, and Richelieu had long desired that it should become a portion of France, instead of remaining a refuge for the unruly. Its possession gave importance to Bouillon's family, and they were loath to surrender the city, but the Cardinal stated the alternative with plainness. They must do without Sedan, he said, or the Duke of Bouillon must do without his head. What the Cardinal threatened it was certain he would execute. Confronted with such an alternative the family yielded. "The Duke of Bouillon is so alarmed by the execution of these gentlemen," Richelieu wrote, gleefully, after the tragedy at Lyons, "that if he had three Sedans he would give them to save his life." Sedan was surrendered to France, the faithful Mazarin was sent to take possession of it in the King's name, and the Duke of Bouillon was pardoned.

The conspiracy of Cinq-Mars, like every conspiracy against Richelieu, ended in failure, and like almost every one, it closed with bloodshed. The character of the minister would seem less sombre to posterity, if he had granted pardon more freely,



DUKE OF BOUILLON.

FROM A PORTRAIT BY BALTAZAR MONCORNET.

but he had seen how many lives were wasted in plots and purposeless insurrections; he saved the blood of the innocent by shedding freely the blood of the guilty.

The careers of many great statesmen have ended in failure and disappointment; they have lost their hold on power, or fortune has failed them at the last; the defeat of Austerlitz saddened Pitt's dying hours; the loss of power embittered Bismarck's closing years. It was not so with Richelieu. He loved dramatic display, and if he had held fortune in the hollow of his hand, he could not have made the close of his career more splendid; his life drama ended in a blaze of glory.

Late in August, 1642, the all-powerful minister, now better in health, started on his return to Paris. He went up the Rhone in a barge, proceeding so slowly against the rapid current that he was seventeen days going from Tarascon to Lyons, a distance of 130 miles. De Thou was carried in a boat fastened to the Cardinal's barge. The unhappy victim was borne along like the captives who formed part of a Roman triumph, and at the close were led off to the Mamertine prisons for execution. The Cardinal did not wait at Lyons to see the punishment of his enemies; he knew their doom was sealed, and on the 12th of September he left the city for his last journey to Paris. He was too weak to travel in a carriage; sometimes he went by water and sometimes he was borne on a litter. At the houses where they stopped, an opening was knocked in the wall big enough to admit the litter, and it was then carried

into the room where the Cardinal slept. Thus he travelled to Roanne, and then gently sailed down the Loire to Briare, dictating to his secretaries and sending orders to generals and ambassadors from his litter. From there he went to Fontainebleau.

He was no sooner in his chamber than the King entered and embraced him; they remained for some time in silence, which friends ascribed to excess of joy. At last all outsiders were directed to retire, and the King and Cardinal held a three hours' conference.

When the minister was somewhat rested he proceeded on his journey; two days' sailing down the Seine brought him to Paris, and on October 17th he was carried into the great Palais Cardinal. Chains were placed in the streets to keep back the vast crowds that gathered to see the great minister as he returned slowly home in his stately litter, triumphant over all his enemies.

The infirm condition of his health seemed to increase his activity. One of his followers in a letter written from Tarascon, in August, has described the manner in which the Cardinal spent his days. He was unable to leave his bed, but he had never toiled, so the letter says, more unremittingly than then.

"From seven to eight he works and dictates, from eight to nine he meditates, at nine he talks with those who may be present, and then comes another hour of work. Then he hears mass, and afterwards dines. From then till two o'clock he has conferences with Mazarin and others, from two to four he works again and afterwards gives audiences to all who have business with him."

Such was the day of an invalid, afflicted by a combination of painful maladies and fast sinking to his grave.

Neither his suffering nor the cares of State absorbed all his attention, for at this same time we find letters from him filled with a scheme for purchasing another library. "It is complete in history," he writes, "the books are well chosen and curious, but very poorly bound." He was eager for the library; he was always eager for what he wanted at all, and the cost rarely deterred him, whether it was an army to be equipped or a book or painting to be bought. Twenty thousand francs would be a large price, he wrote, but he presently added that if it was necessary to pay twenty-two thousand he would consent. Doubtless he consented to pay still more, if required for the satisfaction of his desire.

The perils to which he had been exposed through Cinq-Mars's favour made Richelieu apprehensive of those who held any confidential places near the sovereign, and after his return to Paris he began a vigorous campaign against some of the King's attendants. Louis was loath to dismiss them, and the Cardinal became more persistent. He wrote the King:

"Until all the world is convinced that his Majesty will neither esteem nor suffer those who do not love the Cardinal, no one will believe that France is in a condition of assured tranquillity. . . . The ancient emperors always felt that to dislike their ministers, and to be disaffected toward themselves, was one and the same thing."

This appeal did not have the desired effect. Louis was sometimes stubborn in opposing his minister's wishes, and he may have felt that, as the Cardinal was allowed to govern the State according to his own views, the sovereign should at least be permitted to retain personal attendants that were agreeable to him. He was not allowed even that amount of liberty. Growing infirmity only increased Richelieu's determination to have his own way, and on November 14th, three weeks before his death, he sent Louis what might be regarded as an ultimatum, in which he declared that if he were to continue in the King's service the Court must be cleared of all ill-affected persons. Louis vented his ill-humour on the official who presented this missive, but, as he had always done, he yielded at last to the demands of his imperious servant. He promised to dismiss all enemies of the Cardinal, to keep from him no secret, and never to disclose the counsels which the minister gave him. The offenders were at once dismissed. It was the last victory in Court intrigues which the Cardinal enjoyed.

Success attended Richelieu during his last few months in more important fields than the antechamber of the King or the halls of the Louvre. The years of mingled victory and disaster, which had kept in doubt the outcome of Richelieu's exertions against the House of Austria, were ended, and the triumph of France was now certain; if the Cardinal did not live to gather the fruits of victory, they were assured before he quitted the scene. In Germany the allied armies were more successful than

they had been since Gustavus was their leader. In January, 1642, the Austrians were defeated at Kempen. They lost eight thousand men, and over one hundred captured banners were sent to wreathe the arches of Notre Dame. This was followed in November by a still greater victory for the Swedes, on the field of Breitenfeld, where Gustavus had established his fame eleven years before. The allies took possession of all Silesia and the most of Moravia and Saxony.

Elsewhere the efforts of Richelieu were crowned with equal success. The capture of Perpignan secured Roussillon for France. In Italy the princes of Savoy abandoned their Spanish allies; Savoy united her interests with those of France, and the most of the duchy of Milan was soon taken from Spain. In the Low Countries the Spanish met with similar ill-fortune. Almost for the first time during the long war the French and their allies were victorious in every quarter.

Perhaps the Cardinal did not count it among the least of his mercies that, in July of this year, Mary de' Medici, his bitterest enemy, ended her life in exile.

If the hour of Richelieu's triumph was splendid, it was also brief. Shortly after his arrival at Paris he went to his favourite country house in Rueil. On November 28th, he returned to the Palais Cardinal, where his infirmities were aggravated by a severe attack of fever. The doctors bled him, after the fashion of the times, but he gained nothing from such treatment, and his condition rapidly became

desperate. The death struggles of the man who had so long controlled the destinies of France absorbed the attention of the Court and the city; all waited in suspense for the end. On December 2nd, in all the churches of Paris prayers were offered for the restoration of the Cardinal to health. Probably few of those who uttered them desired their fulfilment; at all events they were not answered. On December 2nd, the King visited the minister whom he had supported so faithfully and loved so little. The Cardinal said he must bid adieu to his master, but he had the satisfaction of feeling that he had served the King faithfully and was leaving him at the summit of his power, with all his enemies vanquished; he asked Louis in memory of his services to care for the interests of his family, and he recommended as useful servants Chavigni, De Noyers, and especially Cardinal Mazarin, whom he desired to be his successor. Though the King's manner was always cold, he manifested some emotion and promised to remember these requests.

The Cardinal's friends and family waited in distraction about the dying man, but he met his end with perfect calmness. Growing rapidly worse, he asked his physicians how long he could live. They answered that they could not say, but doubtless God would prolong a life so necessary to France. "Tell me frankly," he said to Chicot, "not as a physician, but as a friend." "You will be dead or cured in twenty-four hours," said the doctor. "That is talking as one should," said Richelieu; "I understand you." A little after midnight he received the

sacrament. At three he received extreme unction. "Talk to me as a great sinner," he said to the priest, "and treat me as the humblest of your parish." "Do you pardon your enemies?" asked the priest. "I have had none but those of the State," replied the dying man.

As the priest brought the sacrament, he said, "My Judge will soon pass sentence on me. I pray Him to condemn me if I have desired anything save the good of religion and the State." As he received extreme unction, he embraced the crucifix with devotion and unquestioning faith. He met his end calmly and trustfully. The chamber in which he lay dying was thronged with people, for so great a personage could not be left to die in peace. "His assurance appalls me," said a bishop as he marked the perfect confidence with which the Cardinal approached death. But one of the elements of Richelieu's strength had been his conviction of the justice of his own policy. He knew that he was right; he was troubled by no weak doubts and no vacillating purposes, and when the end came the certainty that he had acted for the true interests of Church and State enabled him to face death without fear.

He struggled a day longer. Feeling that the end was near, he turned to his niece, the Duchess of Aiguillon, whom he had loved best of anyone in the world, and said: "I beg you to retire. Do not suffer the pain of seeing me die." She left the room, and in a few moments he was no more.

He died December 4, 1642, in the fifty-eighth

year of his life, in the great palace which he had built for himself, in full possession of all the power, the splendour, and the glory for which he had laboured so long and faithfully. Save to his family and his immediate followers, his death brought no sorrow. The King was relieved when the overshadowing presence had passed away. "If there be a God," said Urban VIII., "he will have to suffer; but if not, he has done well." Over almost all of France a sigh of relief followed the announcement of his death. Save the few whom he favoured, the nobility were united in a common hatred of him. He had trodden hard on the aristocracy of the robe, and they did not love him. The mass of the people saw only heavy taxation, long and wearisome wars, and his own enormous wealth as the results of his administration. The whole country desired a change, after eighteen years of the rule of one man. Bonfires blazed in many places when the news arrived that the iron Cardinal was no more.

He was buried at the church of the Sorbonne, which he had built and chosen as the place where his remains should be laid. His monument, erected in 1694, still stands in the transept, and is not an unworthy memorial of a great man. The burial was celebrated with fitting pomp. At Notre Dame ten thousand candles relieved the darkness of the black velvet in which the church was enveloped, and showed the magnificent catafalque containing the remains. "Though for twenty years," says the gazette, giving an official account of the ceremony, "the most polished writers seemed to have

exhausted the praises of the deceased, yet the funeral oration was enriched by new thoughts, and gave general satisfaction."

Notwithstanding the satisfaction given by the polished words of the orator, the Cardinal's name was hateful, and when Louis XIII. died a few months later it was rumoured that the mob was about to deal with Richelieu's remains as they had with those of Concini,—to tear them from the tomb and scatter them to the winds. No such attempt was actually made until the Revolution, when the tomb was violated by a mob and the Cardinal's head was paraded through the streets of Paris at the end of a pike. It is said that his remains have all been returned to their first resting-place. It does not matter; wherever his ashes may be, his fame will endure so long as the history of France is studied by mankind.

When ill at Narbonne, in peril of death and in great fear of overthrow from the devices of Cinq-Mars, the Cardinal had executed his will, which now became operative. It was in many respects the will of a great nobleman desirous of preserving his estate for his family according to the strict rules of feudal law. Richelieu left to his favourite niece, the Duchess of Aiguillon, large estates in land and sixty thousand livres a year; the Duchy of Fronsac and other lands to his nephew, Armand de Maille, and still greater possessions, with the Duchy of Richelieu, to his grand-nephew, on condition that he should bear the name of Plessis de Richelieu. All was strictly entailed, and by a provision which

seems curious in the will of a priest, it was provided that if the heir at any time should be an ecclesiastic, he should not inherit. True to his aristocratic prejudices, Richelieu forbade his descendants' marrying those not of noble birth; saying that their wealth would enable them to disregard questions of money in their alliances and consider only virtue and noble lineage.

These bequests might have been made by any rich nobleman, but there were other provisions, which could only have been made by Richelieu. He selected the King as a beneficiary, and his gifts were such as even a king might prize. He gave to Louis XIII. the great Palais Cardinal, which thus became the Palais Royal, and long remained a possession of the royal family. To Louis he also gave a million and a half of livres, to constitute a fund to be used by the State in sudden emergencies. Large sums were given to the Sorbonne. His library was left for the use of scholars, but Richelieu made no collections, either of books or works of art, which could be compared with those of his successor; he took a certain patronising interest in such things, but he had neither the strong love for art, nor the taste and zeal in the collection of books, paintings, and statuary, which Mazarin imbibed from his Italian ancestry.

No figures are given of the value of Richelieu's estate, and it would be difficult to estimate it. His wealth was very great; few of the multi-millionaires of this era have left estates which in purchasing power would exceed that of Cardinal Richelieu. It

was accumulated during the eighteen years in which he was prime minister; it was not gained in commerce or speculation, but from the emoluments of office and the liberality of the King; in other words, it was acquired at the expense of the public. Thirty years before, when Bishop of Luçon, he had sighed and scrimped to gather a few hundred crowns with which to buy a service of plate; when he became minister, through his family inheritance and the Queen's favour, his financial condition had improved, but he was not a rich man. In 1634, an inventory was made of his estate, and his income was then five hundred thousand livres, without considering the value of his châteaux and works of art. This was equivalent to an income of one hundred thousand pounds, or half a million dollars in our day. He had been minister ten years, and in the eight years that remained to him his wealth must have largely increased. The revenue from his estate was but a small part of the income which he enjoyed. In addition to this were the emoluments of numerous ecclesiastical offices, and the still larger emoluments of numerous political offices, producing in all an income which allowed him to spend four millions a year and leave a great fortune to his family. In those days there was money in politics. It should be said in Richelieu's defence, that his money was not gained in ways that were then regarded as corrupt. He had not jobbed in government contracts, as Mazarin sometimes did; he had not plundered the treasury, as Fouquet always did; he made no profit by the sale of offices, and received no gifts from foreign

powers, though neither of these practices was unknown to statesmen who were regarded as reasonably honest. At times he had been disinterested, and he declined to receive some of the enormous perquisites of his office as superintendent of marine; doubtless he could say that, great as was his wealth, he could with ease have doubled it.

The salaries paid the holders of important positions were then very large. In addition to these, emoluments which would now be regarded as unseemly or corrupt were pocketed without scruple and without animadversion. Of more importance than the salaries and probably of more importance than the perquisites, a man holding Richelieu's power was certain to receive important gifts from the Crown. No one questioned the propriety of this; the disinterestedness that would decline such favours would have been thought extraordinary and almost superhuman; if these sources of wealth were not increased by bribes and actual corruption, it was all that could be expected. A century later, when Stanhope declined a great bribe offered him by the Abbé Dubois, apparently not without some hesitation and certainly without any indignation, the abbé declared his conduct heroic. Possibly Dubois's standard was not high, but it was the average standard of his day and of the century that preceded it.

Sully was a just and prudent minister, yet he acquired a great fortune in the service of the State; Mazarin became one of the richest men in Europe; Colbert was zealous for the interests of the king he

served, but he left an estate of ten millions; Louvois left a fortune which secured for his descendants a position among the great nobility. Though placed by posterity on a much lower moral level than his famous predecessors, Dubois gathered from the State with a somewhat more sparing hand, and yet he was by no means an example of disinterestedness; Fleury was indifferent to pomp and display and died a poor man; Choiseul died a bankrupt, but this was because no emoluments from office and no private wealth could equal his prodigality.

The difference between our own age and the past, in the accumulation of wealth by public men at the public expense, is worthy of attention, and is encouraging to the student of comparative politics; the tone of political morality, though widely differing in different countries, is on the whole higher. We read of political purity in communities where modes of life were simple and large wealth was unknown, but we cannot compare with the present age exceptional social situations, like those of Sparta, or the early Roman republic, or the American colonies before the Revolution. We must examine countries rich enough to furnish opportunities for gaining wealth, and where social conditions made wealth an object of desire, in order to draw parallels with the present, and these will be encouraging.

Pecuniary disinterestedness among those who obtain important positions in the State now receives no special commendation; the man who enters office poor and leaves it rich is viewed with suspicion; two centuries ago, a man who entered an important office

poor and left it poor would have been regarded as a phenomenon. When leaders in the State scorn gains which their predecessors took with alacrity, a like disinterestedness in time may permeate the lower strata of political life. If Richelieu used his power to accumulate wealth, he should be judged by the standard of his age, but it is pleasant to believe that in our day so great a statesman would be content with fame as the reward for his labours; even if the desire for gain is equally strong, the force of opinion now restrains most public men from becoming rich at the public expense.

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CHAPTER IX

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

1624–1642

IT was Richelieu's ambition to make France both prosperous and powerful; he wished to strengthen the army and build up the navy, and he desired also to develop her industries and her commerce. The plans formulated in the early years of his career for the most part failed of execution. In Richelieu's administration the intervals of peace were rarer and briefer than in the reign of Napoleon, and an era of war is not often an era of commercial progress. Yet a review of the Cardinal's career would be imperfect without some account of his efforts in the line of industrial development, even if their result was not all that he hoped.

France had already begun a career of colonial development which, if it had been pursued with intelligence, might have made her one of the great colonial powers of the world. Richelieu was fully aware of the importance of this field for enterprise, and if his energies had not been absorbed by the Thirty Years'

War, he would have done much in this direction. He realised that France, with an extended seaboard, a soil furnishing everything required for naval construction, and a hardy population bred to the sea and trained in seamanship, was well equipped for becoming a great maritime power.

The Cardinal took the colonies and the marine under his special charge, and in 1626 he was made superintendent of navigation and commerce. He at once applied himself to the construction of a navy that should be worthy of a powerful kingdom. Henry IV. had not left one man-of-war to his successor, and when Richelieu assumed office in 1624, France had no navy deserving the name. To carry on war with La Rochelle, the French government was obliged to borrow ships from Holland; the mariners of this one town, even without English help, were able to contend with the few ill-equipped ships which the general government could call its own. This condition of affairs was changed by Richelieu. During his administration the French navy counted twenty men-of-war, besides eighty other ships of various sizes and kinds. Probably it could have met on equal terms the navy of any other European nation.

An efficient navy was required for the protection of commerce, and the want of it imposed an annual loss of millions on French merchants and retarded the growth of French trade. Piratical craft, coming principally from Barbary, but with representatives from many other countries, pursued their occupation almost with impunity. In the waters of

the Mediterranean and the Bay of Biscay many a good ship was overhauled by pirates; sometimes the crew were carried away to be sold to a Mohammedan pasha, sometimes they were murdered at once by European desperadoes, who had no use for slaves, and contented themselves with stealing the cargo. When sufficient plunder was not found at sea, a piratical band often surprised some maritime town and escaped laden with spoils, besides men for slaves and women for the harem. Such evils could only be destroyed by a navy that would make piracy too dangerous a business to be attractive. This result was not wholly accomplished, but the increased strength of the French navy under Richelieu somewhat lessened a danger that constantly threatened both those who went to sea and those who dwelt along the coast.

In many other ways Richelieu sought to build up the foreign commerce of France. He chartered trading companies, and if none of them attained to great prosperity, the blame could not wholly be charged to him. Colonisation had already been directed to North America, and, to increase French trade in that country, in 1638 the Company of New France was organised. The charter was indeed liberal: all of New France, which went by the name of Canada, extending from Newfoundland to Florida, was granted the proprietors; they were to have a perpetual monopoly of the fur trade, and for fifteen years a monopoly of all trade; they could grant titles of nobility, and many of those taking stock were themselves ennobled. On them were imposed

obligations properly required by a cardinal, for their trading-posts were to be kept well supplied with missionaries, and only Catholics could be landed on Canadian soil. These obligations were not disregarded; the history of Canada shows that the supply of priests was always sufficient and often excessive; whatever else a French colony needed, it rarely lacked religious instructors.

Another engagement was more imperfectly fulfilled. The new company was required within fifteen years to land four thousand colonists in Canada, all good Catholics, to furnish them with supplies, and to make for them a certain provision in land. The company was troubled to furnish supplies, and still more troubled to find colonists. It was not because there were no men in France ready to cross the seas in the hope of better fortune, but because the Government gave them so little chance of realising their hopes. The same defect was found in French and Spanish colonisation. Privileged companies held a monopoly of the only trades in which there was a chance of acquiring wealth. It was not worth while to leave the rich soil and pleasant skies of France in order to plant crops where the land was poorer and the climate was colder. It is usually easier to make money in a new land than in an old and thickly settled country, and this was true of Canada; the trade in furs, where the fortunate trapper might find game in abundance, or purchase a valuable pelt from an Indian for a few beads or a drink of whiskey, furnished the possibility of large and rapid gain. Nor was

this the only branch of trade in which the bold and fortunate dealer might hope for wealth, but the Government kept the monopoly of all such golden opportunities for the trading companies, and yet marvelled that settlers would not brave the hardships of the frontier when unallured by the chance of gain.

To the system of monopoly Richelieu clung in all his efforts to develop colonial enterprise. In this he followed the unbroken traditions of French administration, and if his political conceptions were marked by novelty, he never manifested any originality in questions of commerce or finance. But, however imperfect were the agencies used, he drew the attention of the nation to the importance of colonial development and built up a powerful navy, the first requisite for acquiring and holding a foreign empire. A century later, France lost her opportunity in America and India by incapacity and indifference, but such faults could never be imputed to Richelieu.

Trading companies were organised to deal both in the East and West, empowered not only to acquire foreign possessions and carry on foreign commerce, but to lay hold of tramps and beggars, and force them to labour in their employ for six years without pay. Although this form of white slavery was little practised, black slaves began to be introduced into the French West Indies. It is said that Louis was averse to this procedure, and was with difficulty brought to sanction it. It is not likely that he was supported in his humanitarian views by the Cardinal.

More than a century was to pass before anyone, save a few unusually sensitive souls, saw any harm in enslaving black people when white people could gain by it.

A more serious question presented itself in the matter of tobacco; the public conscience was more disturbed by the sale of tobacco than by the sale of men. To the settlers of the West India islands this was one of the most important crops, but the Government looked with suspicion upon its use. It found its profit in the doubt: an edict declared that a low price for tobacco would injure the health of the King's subjects by inducing them to use the weed too freely, and this furnished the pretext for imposing a heavy duty. But the use of tobacco was still in its infancy, and the amount consumed in France was insignificant. Smoking was regarded as vulgar and almost as immoral; a confirmed smoker was looked upon as little better than a confirmed drunkard. Neither reproof nor scorn checked the habit, but the number of smokers increased slowly. The price of tobacco was high; it was not then a luxury within the reach of the poorest, and the widespread use of the weed is modern.

Amid all his cares, Richelieu never lost sight of his plans for colonial extension. Only a few months before his death, when he was harassed by the vicissitudes of the Thirty Years' War and by the intrigues of Cinq-Mars, and when he was suffering from a fatal malady, he found time to issue a new edict in aid of a society for American colonisation. Territories were given away by the edict with the looseness

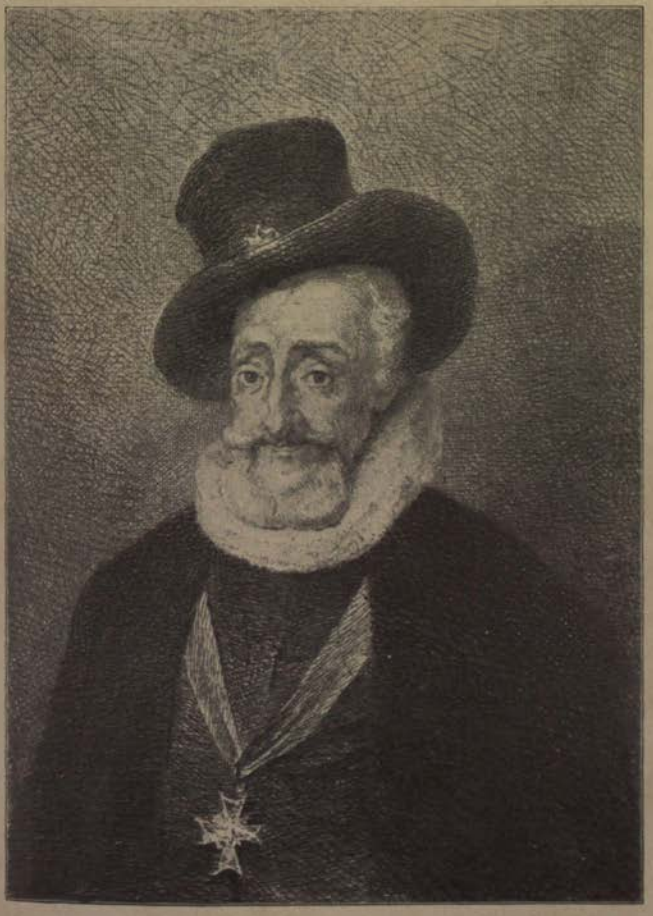
common in those days of uncertain rights and imperfect geography, for to the company was granted all the islands of the West Indies between the tenth and thirtieth parallels of latitude, a description that included Cuba, Jamaica, and Porto Rico. The privileges of the company of colonisation were never exercised, and looseness in the wording of the grant was not important.

Another measure of Richelieu, though of no great importance at the time, possesses a certain interest. Russia was then hardly regarded as a portion of Europe, and exercised no influence in European politics. If the Czar had taken a hand in the Thirty Years' War it would have excited as much surprise as if the Shah of Persia had decided to interfere in behalf of German liberties, but in 1629 Richelieu sent a representative to the Court of Moscow, and a treaty was made, the first between two countries that have since so often met as deadly enemies or as sworn friends. This treaty had only commercial advantages in view, and its terms show how greatly protective principles have grown since that day, for by it French merchandise could enter Russia on payment of a duty of two per cent. Compared with the duties levied under modern protective tariffs, both in Europe and America, the Russian Czar, Michael Romanoff, seems like an early apostle of free trade.

The reign of Louis XIII. was not marked by any considerable degree of industrial or agricultural development. Three centuries ago, the growth of national wealth was slow, and during the eighteen

years of Richelieu's administration it is doubtful if there was any material gain in France. Under Henry IV. there had been a marked improvement in the condition of the French people. To a large extent this was a natural reaction from a long period of internal disorder; during most of the sixteenth century religious controversies kept the land in turmoil, the country was overrun by hostile armies which plundered Catholic and Protestant with impartiality, agriculture was interrupted, and no industrial prosperity could be expected in a land disturbed by civil war. When Henry IV. was firmly established on the throne there came an era of good order, of regular government, and moderate taxation, under which the energies of an industrious people rapidly repaired the losses of the past. This reaction was assisted by judicious legislation, for in commercial sagacity Henry's minister, Sully, was superior to any French statesman until Turgot.

If rulers cannot often increase wealth by legislation, they can at least do away with the regulations which check its natural growth; of these there were many at that era, nor are they wholly lacking in France three centuries later. Sully was faithful in his devotion to the cow and the plough, on which he declared that French prosperity was based. Next to the restoration of order, the permission granted by Henry IV. for the free exportation of grain from France proved most beneficial to the agriculturist. Restrictions on the export of grain were intended to assure an abundance for French needs, but their effect was not to make bread



HENRY IV.

FROM A CONTEMPORARY PAINTING IN MUSEUM AT VERSAILLES.

cheaper, but the farmer poorer. With comparatively free trade in grain, the husbandman found a surer market, and agricultural interests prospered greatly under Henry IV. The introduction of the silkworm added another great industry, and in many ways the lot of the artisan was improved. Arthur Young was right in saying that, in the reign of Henry IV., the economical condition of France was better than that of England. This prosperity did not continue during the reign of Louis XIII. Taxation became heavier under Richelieu and the condition of the peasantry did not improve. The treasures accumulated under Henry IV. were soon dissipated by Mary de' Medici. There were over twenty millions in the treasury when Sully was removed, and there was nothing left when Richelieu was appointed. The Cardinal was not familiar with financial questions; improvements in the method of taxation could not be expected from him, and he did not attempt them.

His economic legislation displayed little novelty and not much wisdom. The paternal theory of government was in full force and he did not seek to change it. It accorded with his own views, with his desire to concentrate power in the general government, with his conviction of the wisdom of rulers and the unwisdom of the ruled. The protecting hand of the State was extended over almost every branch of human industry: the State regulated the rate of interest, that the usurer should not charge too much; it superintended the manufacture of goods, that fraud might be prevented; it fixed the rate of

wages, that the employer should not pay too much or the employee receive too little; it forbade the importation of goods, lest the manufacturer should lose his gain; it imposed great penalties on sending silver and gold out of the kingdom, lest the circulation should be insufficient and the country be robbed of its precious metals; it told the farmer how much land he might put into wheat, and how much he might plant with the vine, lest, in search of his private gain, he should injure the public weal; the existence of laws of trade, which no legislation could override, was as little suspected as the existence of the law of gravitation. In these respects, there was little change in the legislation of Richelieu. The regulation of commerce steadily increased in severity; it was carried further under Colbert than under Richelieu, and further under Louis XV. than under Louis XIV.

It was not alone in his business activity that the authorities sought to control the individual. We find the Parliament of Paris forbidding Madame de Pibracq to take a seventh husband. Doubtless she should have been satisfied with the six she had lost, but such interference is no longer practised by the courts. The Parliament of Toulouse appointed commissioners to decide upon the settlement proper for a lady who was about to marry. Another decree forbade a young man of rank to unite his fortunes with the famous Marion de Lorme.

Marriage received no more attention than other phases of private life. The regulation of dress by the State has often been attempted, though no

with which to realise his dreams of ambition. In the war against the Huguenots in 1621, the whole army consisted of about twelve thousand men. The King left Paris, says Richelieu, with a following more appropriate for a huntsman than a conqueror. It was not with such forces that the King went to war when Richelieu was his minister. Soon the army counted sixty thousand men; in 1638, the French had one hundred and fifty thousand men under arms; if the number seems small in days of universal conscription, it was then regarded as prodigious.

The condition of Europe made it possible to gather large armies under the banner of any nation that was able and willing to pay the cost. Forced service was practically unknown, nor could any king rely on the patriotism of his subjects to furnish the troops needed for a long war. But in every part of Europe there were men in abundance who followed the trade of fighting, and were willing to sell themselves to any purchaser. The unsettled conditions of the times increased the supply of those ready for a soldier's life; during a generation great sections of Germany were laid waste; the man whose home was burned and who found no opportunity of earning his living in peaceful walks took up fighting as a means of livelihood. In Switzerland, Hungary, Poland, Italy, Scotland, and, indeed, in every European country, the recruiting officer could find mercenaries ready to enlist under his banner. There was a constant search after recruits, and the price was surprisingly low. All commercial articles have

increased in value, but human life, says an historian, has augmented in price most of all. In 1870, a substitute in France cost two thousand francs; in 1630, one could readily be obtained for six francs fifty centimes. Later in the Thirty Years' War, the price ranged from twelve to eighteen francs, while in the American Civil War a thousand dollars was freely paid for a recruit.

Yet a soldier's lot, though it was so readily accepted, was worse than in modern times. Not only was the pay small, but the nine or ten sous a day were almost always in arrears, and often were not paid at all. "There is a Frenchman in my service," said the Duke of Lorraine, "who constantly asks for money,—as if I ever paid my soldiers!" Even in the French army the pay was always in arrears, and often threats of mutiny were necessary to extract a few months' back wages. "We have sent a month's pay for the cavalry at Casale," writes Richelieu, "but as for the infantry, we furnish them bread, wine, and meat, and can pay them only with fair words."

The proportion of life lost in battle was larger than now, and the loss by sickness was in still greater proportion. If the pay was irregular, the food was no less so. Roads were bad, money was scarce, corruption was on a gigantic scale, and of system there was none. Naturally the commissariat was always in a lamentable plight. Usually the soldier was ill fed, and often he was not fed at all. If food was wanting in the camp, there was no lack of filth. The troops could not remain long in one

place, wrote a German officer, without infection; the refuse of the camp, horses that had died, the remains of animals killed for food, were left uncared for, to breed contagion. If the duty of removing such things was imposed on anyone, it was sure to be neglected.

The soldier unfortunate enough to become a prisoner rarely found anyone who thought it worth while to give heed to his comfort. Often, indeed, he had an opportunity to take service in the army where he was a captive, and a change of masters was not grievous for the mercenary who fought with equal zeal under any banner. But if a soldier was unwilling to desert his flag and unable to pay a ransom, he might be left to starve or he might be sent to serve in the galleys.

Nor did a grateful country furnish liberal pensions for those maimed or crippled in her service. Many a veteran got his living by begging; some more fortunate obtained food and shelter as a return for ringing the bell at the church, or sweeping out the cloisters at the monastery.

Notwithstanding all these hardships, the service was more alluring than the monotonous discipline of modern times. Where pay and rations were irregular, it was impossible to preserve strict discipline, and the soldier could indulge in a reasonable amount of license. He was only expected to serve six months in a year, and he often shortened this time by desertion; a host of camp-followers, men and women, relieved the tedium of camp life; if the Government did not always furnish sufficient rations,

it frequently billeted the soldier on some family, where he made himself at home, generally to the infinite discomfort of his unwilling entertainers; if sack and pillage were not universal, they were not unknown, and the scenes of riot, murder, robbery, and lust, when some unhappy city was committed to the mercies of a victorious soldiery, furnished compensation for months or years of danger and discomfort. "After so much toil and hardship," said Tilly when he was asked to stop the horrors of the sack of Magdeburg, "we must let the soldier amuse himself."

Naturally such a life did not make the average soldier a creditable member of society. A French king in the sixteenth century, speaking of his troops, said:

"Those vagabonds are abandoned to every vice; they are thieves, murderers, violators of women, blasphemers, and infidels; they pillage and destroy all they find, beat the good man and drive him out of his house, and do more harm to our poor subjects than a Turk could even conceive."

The description was not much exaggerated and was equally true in the next century. Richelieu admits that his soldiers, being of all religions, cleaned their boots with the holy oil, broke the images of the Virgin, trampled the sacrament under foot, and used the crucifix as a target for musket practice. They were guilty of other offences, more grievous if not more impious.

If the modern army was not developed under

Richelieu, in every branch of the service there was improvement during his administration. At his death the French army was still far removed from the disciplined force which Louvois sent to conquer provinces for Louis XIV., but the Cardinal can be considered as a forerunner of the great war minister. He succeeded in forming some sort of a regular military organisation; the ministry of war could fairly be said to date from his day. By his indomitable energy, he extracted the millions necessary to keep great armies in the field, and if their condition was still bad, their pay was more regular, their food and care better than in the past. He even organised some kind of a hospital service. The Jesuits did good work in this direction; they anticipated the activity of the Red Cross Society, furnished care and medicine to the sick and wounded soldier, and, if they could not save his body, granted him absolution and saved his soul. These improvements in the military system were not altogether lost, though it was not until Louvois became minister of war that the French army exceeded in excellence that of any other European nation.

Richelieu's attempts to strengthen the French marine and develop French colonies were not very important in their results. Under Mazarin the condition of the navy was as poor as it had been under Henry IV., and colonial development received little attention until Colbert became minister.

But the changes made by Richelieu in internal administration permanently modified the form of French government. He believed that good order,

the welfare of the State, and the prosperity of the individual, would be attained by centralising the administration, by weakening or destroying the remnants of local rule which operated as a check upon the efficient action of the general government, and this object he pursued steadily and successfully.

The minister had no taste for popular assemblies. He had been a member of the States-General; he was impressed by its failure to produce any important results, and he had no desire to see such an institution become more effective. Nor did he view with any more favour the provincial States which still existed in some parts of France, or the various forms of local activity which had thus far escaped the benumbing influence of the general government.

He would have thought it impossible to fit the people for self-government, and a fatal measure for the State, even if it had been possible. For public opinion he had a contempt that he did not conceal, and which was not entirely unfounded. "The people complain," he writes, "of necessary evils as much as of those that can be avoided; they are ignorant of what is useful to the State, and complain of ills which must be borne in order to escape still greater ills."

Apprehensive lest the people should acquire an influence that he believed would be dangerous, he found, or professed to find, comfort in the reflection that their poverty would leave them no time for dreams of political power. In his political testament he wrote:

"All politicians agree that, if the people were too much at their ease, they could not be kept in the path of duty. Having less intelligence than the more educated orders, they can be restrained only by necessity. If they were freed from all impositions, they would lose the memory of their condition and think they were released from obedience. Like mules accustomed to burdens, they are more injured by long rest than by moderate labour."

There was little danger of the French peasant forgetting his obedience because the burden of taxation was removed; it was oppressive under Louis XIII., and grew no lighter under his successors.

Nor did Richelieu view with favour any scheme for universal education. In an edict which he drafted, though it was never carried into effect, it was stated that, by reason of the great number of colleges, too many people had their children educated, and few were left to devote themselves to commerce and war, on which depended the welfare of the State. And for that reason he sought to restrict the number of such institutions, leaving untouched, indeed, the parish schools in which children could be taught the rudiments.

There was little reason to fear that education would be too widespread, for the majority of the population remained in total ignorance. The prosperous bourgeois, who saw for their children an opportunity of social advancement, were eager for their education; it was largely by them that the colleges were filled, and no discouragement abated their zeal. They sought education, not from any love of

learning, but because they realized its utility. The petty tradesman, who had accumulated money, desired for his son a position in the courts or the civil service; this was in itself a rise in society, and it furnished the opportunity for a man of ability and ambition to rise still higher. For such a position a certain amount of education and social culture was necessary; the boorish habits, the uncultivated language of the father barred his way to such positions, and he was the more eager that his son should attend college, should know enough Latin to be a lawyer, enough grammar to talk correctly, and enough of literature to meet educated people without making himself absurd. The increasing influence of the French bourgeoisie was attended by an increasing interest in the education of their children.

In a lower social scale, among peasants and handicraftsmen, there was little education, and the fault was not wholly that of the State. The facilities for primary education were indeed irregular and uncertain, but the supply of schools more than sufficed for the demand. In most of the parishes there was some provision for teaching, and those unable to pay could usually procure for their children a certain measure of instruction free of cost.

This instruction was rudimentary and not always imparted by persons who would shine in normal schools. The pay of the village schoolmaster varied with the liberality of the local authorities, but it was always a pittance. We find one teacher receiving sixty livres, or twelve dollars a year, another forty-five livres, another thirty, with wood and

lodging thrown in; another is paid as much as 175 livres; there was every variety of price, and doubtless an equal variety in the regularity of payment. This scanty income was usually eked out by other employment. The teacher was sometimes the sacristan of the church, sometimes the leader of the choir, occasionally the gaoler or the constable. His past experience was often varied. One had been a monk who had abandoned his monastery, another a soldier who had left the service, and another a man of various trades who had succeeded in none. Naturally the teachers were not always all that could be desired. The people of Dauphiny complained of their pedagogue because he was constantly stealing fruit from the neighbouring orchards, thus setting a bad example to his pupils. Others were no better; and often some vagrant instructor, after a few days' work, would quit his job without the formality of taking leave, and the children remained untaught.

Still, the chief trouble was not so much the lack of facilities furnished by the State, as the lack of desire for education on the part of the people. Ambitious bourgeois kept the higher schools and colleges well filled, but an ordinary labourer saw no advantage in knowing how to read and write, and had no wish that his children should acquire that knowledge. The hours at school interfered with work they could do at home; the little learning they might extract from the sacristan or the gaoler neither increased their happiness nor their wages. During nine months, say some local authorities in

Languedoc, explaining the non-attendance at their schools, the children were working in the fields, and during the three months of winter the roads were either impassable from snow or dangerous from the wolves by which the country was infested.

In the cities the proportion of uneducated persons was less than in the country, and still it was large. Statistics differ widely in different places, and any conclusion must be drawn with caution, but in many parishes not over twenty per cent. of those married could sign their names to the certificate, and many who could sign their names carried their studies in reading and writing no further. The greater part of the population in Richelieu's day was entirely uneducated and was content to remain so, and the Cardinal himself would have been as much appalled by the prospect of universal education as by the prospect of universal suffrage.

There is no necessity for tracing the various measures by which the Cardinal accomplished the overthrow of local authorities, sometimes by violence, sometimes by stealthy undermining, or by devising new methods to render the action of the general government more effective. Nothing, perhaps, tended more to restrict the power of these authorities than the increasing activity of the officers representing the central government, who were known as superintendents.

The institution of superintendents has been counted among the innovations which Richelieu made in French administration. In fact, these officials existed before his day, but under him they

first became an important factor in government. As far back as Henry II., we find commissioners sent to the different provinces, instructed to make inquiry into matters of interest to the general government, or to execute for it certain duties, but such commissions were comparatively rare, and not until Richelieu's day do we find these delegates of the central government—superintendents as they came to be called—taking a recognised part in the administration. The growth of their power, like the growth of centralised government in France, depended not merely upon statesmen who sought to utilise them, but upon the character of the people among whom they were placed. Their activity steadily increased. Not very important functionaries in the sixteenth century, under Richelieu they became persons of weight; under Louis XIV. their authority was still greater; under Louis XV. they had so absorbed the direction of local concerns that a pump in a petty hamlet could not be repaired without the approval of the superintendent.

At the beginning they met with a certain resistance, but this ceased in time. Among a people tenacious of their privileges and jealous of any interference by the central government, the power of such officials could not have grown until it had sapped the vitality of all local institutions. But the French have not been averse to the interference of authority; paternal government has been popular; belief in the wisdom of rulers has been stronger than with English-speaking people, and the impatience of restraint has been less.

Thus the tendency to centralisation was fostered by Richelieu and his successors, and to it the people with little reluctance accustomed themselves. Rural populations found in submitting their welfare to an all-wise superintendent the same satisfaction, the same release from responsibility, that devout Catholics find in intrusting their salvation to the care of the Church.

Superintendents of justice, finance, and police these officials were called, and within those three great departments almost every phase of public life could easily be placed. The instructions given the superintendents were as comprehensive as their titles.

"We direct you," so ran the instructions of the superintendent in the province of Champagne in 1633, "to investigate any secret enterprises against our service, and pass judgment upon the guilty; to take steps toward the reformation of justice; to hear complaints against any official; to examine all bureaus of finance; to confer with mayors and aldermen of cities and see that they observe all regulations; to secure an abundance of provisions wherever armies may pass; to see that the soldiers observe discipline, and to judge between them and our subjects; to punish all who infringe our ordinances, whether they be soldiers or officials of whatever degree; to see that all moneys raised for bridges, highways, and walls of cities are properly employed,"

and so on, until almost every phase of local, military, or political action in the province was subjected to his charge.

Even these powers were less far-reaching than were intrusted to the same officials a hundred years later. Then the superintendent was indeed a viceroy, vested with supreme authority in the province to which he was accredited. "The kingdom of France," said Law, with little exaggeration, "is governed by thirty superintendents; on them depends the misery or happiness of the province." The institution organised by Richelieu had indeed attained a stupendous growth. Not only the regulation of commerce, the imposition of taxation, the care of the soldiers, the cultivation of the soil, but every detail of local administration, the repairs of the parish church, the construction of the city market, the location of the village highway, were regulated by the all-pervading superintendent.

And yet this official, a viceroy while he remained in his district, was rarely a person of independent position. He passed from autocratic power to insignificance when his term expired, unless his services had been sufficiently acceptable to the minister to procure for him some permanent appointment.

For the most part, the superintendents were intelligent men who exercised with fair judgment their extensive powers. Richelieu had no confidence in popular wisdom; he thought officials selected by him could regulate local affairs better than the mayor and aldermen of some town, chosen by intrigue and usually guided by selfish considerations, or the people of some hamlet, of whom few could read or write. As a general rule, the administration of the superintendents was beneficial. They were

men of larger experience and better judgment than the innumerable petty officials upon whose jurisdiction they encroached. The evil inherent in the institution was the same that affected many of Richelieu's political conceptions. His superintendents brought present advantage at the cost of ultimate harm. The Cardinal no more believed in allowing a village to regulate its own affairs than in allowing a people to govern themselves. He had no more use for parish vestrymen than for States-General. Certainly the bulk of the population in Richelieu's days was little fitted for self-government. Yet there existed in the towns and in the provinces many phases of political life, for the most part relics of mediæval conditions, slowly becoming more and more torpid, which might have been revived and rendered useful. Instead of being utilised, they were minimised by Richelieu. The paralysis of local institutions was hastened by the all-pervading activity of the superintendents, and this result was favourably regarded by the Cardinal. Unaccustomed to take any part in local affairs, the French citizen was less inclined to demand a voice in the general government. Even if he sought a home in some new land, he still relied on the representative of the Government to guide his course; the French colonist in Canada or Louisiana was in this respect far removed from his English rival in Massachusetts or Virginia. The centralisation which was injurious by the Rhone and the Loire became fatal by the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence.

Institutions more important to the country than

the local bodies which Richelieu suppressed, or the superintendents whom he created, began their development during his administration. The title of Father of the French Press is given to Theophraste Renaudot, a physician, who, in 1631, began the publication of the *Gazette*, the first French journal which deserved to be called a newspaper. The *Gazette* did not, indeed, bear any close resemblance to the modern newspaper. The first rude engine of Stephenson was not so far removed from the modern locomotive as was the paper of Renaudot from the great sheets of to-day. It appeared but once a week, with occasional extras, and consisted of four pages about the size of an octavo volume. There were, of course, no editorials; the press was under rigorous supervision, and the editor who had assumed to advise the Government or to criticise Richelieu's policy would have exchanged his sanctum for the Bastille; occasionally a few words of discussion appeared, which were sure to contain glowing references to the goodness of the King and the wisdom of the Cardinal. Advertisements were unknown; the art of advertising, which has attained such great although not always such fair proportions, did not exist. The tradesman was content to keep his regular patrons, and did not dream of bringing his wares to the attention of the community by encomiums upon them in the public press. At that period no inventive genius had even imagined the advantages of alluring displays of articles in the window, or of enticing suggestions on the sign.

The newspaper, therefore, manifested neither the wisdom of the editor, nor the ingenuity of the advertiser. Naturally, also, its selection of news was restricted; events agreeable to the administration had prompt mention, defeats and disasters received slow and scanty notice. Yet, meagre as was the record, its importance was recognised by Richelieu, and in his private memoranda are many directions as to the manner in which occurrences of importance should be reported in the *Gazette*. The King did more than this,—he wrote for the newspaper. The subjects treated by the monarch were not always of weight; they were often the reports of Court festivities, a class of news which the paper never omitted, or occasionally accounts of an engagement in the field, and, more rarely, a few words of political discussion. The Cardinal approved of this harmless amusement, and allowed the King to describe events of interest, much as the senior editor of a paper might assign a similar task to a young reporter. "His Majesty will send a memoir to Renaudot as is his custom," he writes to Louis, referring to a recent battle.

Humble as was the position of such a journal, it was important, not only as the beginning of a great institution, but because the fact was recognised that the community wished to know, and ought to be instructed as to the doings of the world; that wars and treaties were not solely for the consideration of ministers, but it was important that the public should have the means of passing judgment upon them.

Newspapers, like books, were under rigorous supervision. The edicts by which the liberty of the press was restricted were no more severe under Richelieu than they had long been, but under his rule laws which had been dead letters were put in execution. The minister recognised the importance of public opinion, and was the more resolved that it should not be misdirected. "The *Gazette* will do its duty," he writes, "or Renaudot will be deprived of the pensions he has received." The *Gazette* always did its duty and Renaudot was never left pensionless.

The punishment of those who ventured to criticise the Government was severe. Death was often prescribed for such offences; it was rarely inflicted, but long imprisonment was an ordinary penalty. So rigorous was the censure that even almanacs were not regarded as beneath attention; they were forbidden to print anything of a more dangerous character than the phases of the moon, eclipses, and the various conditions and humours of the weather. *Poor Richard's Almanac* would have been repressed under Richelieu. Hostile criticism was forbidden and absolute silence on political questions was preferred. "Whoever treats or disputes concerning the power or supreme authority of the King, or of any other sovereign, save by his Majesty's permission," says an edict, "will be punished as a dangerous person and a disturber of the public peace."

Richelieu sought to eradicate a pernicious practice of the French nobility; he succeeded in checking it temporarily, though it continued to flourish long

after his day. Duelling in France had steadily increased in virulence. This custom has never enjoyed great favour among northern nations, and by most English-speaking people has long been regarded, not only as vicious, but as absurd. It found a more congenial soil farther south, and is still prevalent in France, though it is now little more than a harmless pastime. In the early part of the seventeenth century, duelling was much practised by French gentlemen, and it was not the innocent sport which it has become among their descendants. The results of such meetings were often as serious as their pretext was slight; not only some grave insult, but a trifling word, a discourteous gesture, an imaginary affront must be wiped out in blood. The man who declined a cartel would have been disgraced, but no one refused such an invitation. The nobility were reckless of life and eager to gain a reputation for gallantry, and a successful duel was often a step to favour.

Such encounters were so frequent that the public streets sometimes became the field of battle. Occasionally they fought at night by the light of the stars or with the aid of torches, and fashion suggested a constant variety in the modes of warfare. But, whatever were the differences in the hours of fighting or the weapons used, the results were generally serious and often fatal. One gentleman, of whom Richelieu found nothing worse to say than that he was brave but cruel, fought seventeen duels and killed sixteen of his opponents. The object of a duel in those days was to kill, and if one

of the parties were disabled or lost his weapons, his opponent ran a sword through him without compunction and without fear of criticism. A duellist whose antagonist had lost his weapon allowed him to procure another instead of forthwith killing him, and this was noised abroad as an act of extraordinary magnanimity.

Not only the principals but the seconds took part in the encounter, though the latter had not even the pretence of a quarrel and fought one another solely as a matter of etiquette. Seconds were often killed, yet the honour of filling the position was eagerly sought, and those fortunate enough to have a duel in prospect were besieged by would-be recruits. A lad who had just joined the service as a cadet, overhearing a young officer making arrangements for a duel, forthwith declared that unless he were added to the seconds, he would expose the matter to the superiors, and as a result of his threats he was put on the list. Six young officers took part in the contest, of whom two were killed and three grievously wounded. Sometimes a duelling party was enlarged to ten or twelve, of whom only two had any grievance, and the others endeavoured to kill each other as a matter of amusement.

There had been frequent edicts against duelling, but like most laws which are not supported by popular sentiment, they remained unexecuted. In the reign of Henry IV. duelling was forbidden under severe penalties; the penalties were never imposed, and it was well known that the King regarded a skilful duellist with favour.

Richelieu not only issued a new edict against duelling, but he put it in execution. The Count of Bouteville had already fought twenty-two duels, but not content with this, in 1627, he insisted on fighting his twenty-third with much publicity in the Place Royale, in Paris, and killed his opponent. The Cardinal resolved that he should be made an example, and Bouteville and his second were tried and condemned to death. The count belonged to the great family of Montmorenci, his son was to be the famous Marshal Luxembourg, and his friends and kinsmen could not believe that a gentleman would suffer a felon's death for so harmless an act as killing a man in a duel. Both principal and second were executed, and their fate excited universal commiseration. However willing to meet death at the hands of a social equal, no one wished to meet death at the hands of the public executioner, and the frequency of duels was somewhat abated. But they were not unknown in Richelieu's day, and so difficult is it to punish what public opinion approves, that even the Cardinal did not seek out offenders who avoided undue publicity. After his death, the practice was again unrestrained; in the eight years of Anne of Austria's regency, almost one thousand gentlemen were killed in duels. They became less numerous and less bloody under Louis XIV. The King disapproved of them and customs had grown milder. The " brave but cruel gentleman " whom Richelieu viewed with a certain admiration, would have been regarded merely as a cutthroat in the latter part of the century; the amelioration of

manners, more than any edicts, checked the ferocity of French duelling.

Another measure attracted little attention, though it was the formal assumption of what has since become one of the most important functions of government. Correspondence by letter was comparatively rare; a considerable proportion of the population could not write, business relations were little extended, the Parisian shopkeeper sent one letter where his successor, the great merchant, now sends a hundred; the difficulty and expense of communicating with remote towns kept correspondence within narrow bounds. Still there was a necessity for some means of communication, but the State had not as yet assumed the task of furnishing it. As far back as the reign of Louis XI., a service had been organised of messengers travelling on horseback, but their duties were confined to carrying despatches of the Government to different parts of France, or to its representatives abroad. By a curious regulation, the University of Paris acted as general postman; to it was granted the exclusive right of supplying messengers to carry letters, money, and packages to various parts of the kingdom. The privilege was of some value, and, in 1630, royal messengers began to carry letters for private persons. This duty was at first intrusted to certain officials who purchased their positions, and received for themselves the profits to be made. The Government derived its gain from the sale of the offices, but this measure led to a change of far more importance, and thirty years later the Government

assumed exclusive charge of the mails. Alike from the cost of transportation and the small amount of correspondence, the system was still in its infancy. In 1630, two carriers each week took letters from Paris, and this was considered as a sufficient service for the needs of the city. For places no more distant than Lyons the postage for letters was three sous, the same price that is charged now, but three sous in relative value were equal to fifteen sous in our day.

The difference in the cost of transportation can be illustrated in other ways than the cost of postage. Shortly after 1638, the canal of Briare was completed. It was commenced under Henry IV., but though it extended less than fifty miles he abandoned a task which exceeded the moderate engineering skill of his time. Some years later the interest of the Government in the unfinished ditch was ceded to private parties, and by them the enterprise was again undertaken and completed. The canal furnished a route by which goods from Touraine and Anjou could reach the Seine by water, and great was the admiration when boats loaded at Tours and Angers appeared at the wharves in Paris. Yet this traffic, cheap in comparison with transportation by land, was subject to charges which now would be thought ruinous. The carriage of a ton of merchandise from Briare to Paris by the canal, computed in relative values, cost seventy-two francs. The same quantity is now carried the same distance by water for one sixth of that sum, and by rail for about one fifth of the cost and at ten times the speed.

CHAPTER X

RICHELIEU'S RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCH

RICHELIEU'S career as a statesman was governed by considerations of worldly policy, and little influenced by regard for the interests of the Church of which he was a priest. Even his action against the Huguenots was based upon secular motives; he sought to overthrow the Protestant party in France, not because they were always rebels against the Church, but because they were often rebels against the State. When their political power was destroyed, they suffered no further molestation from the minister; the measures adopted by Louis XIV. which drove from France hundreds of thousands of useful citizens, Richelieu would have regarded with reprobation. During most of his administration he was the ally of Protestant states and the enemy of Catholic princes. Naturally he was regarded at Rome with little favour, and he excited the constant animosity of the extreme Catholic party in France. That he was an unworthy priest, that he waged war against Catholicism and espoused the cause of misbelievers,

that he opposed the true faith in its efforts to reclaim the unfaithful, were accusations of which his enemies never wearied.

Nevertheless the Cardinal was a strong and fervent Catholic, his faith in the principles of the Christian religion and in the dogmas of the Catholic Church was implicit and unquestioning; his enemies upbraided him as a worldly priest, but if he was sometimes remiss in his practice, he was always sincere in his profession.

Not only was he sincere in his acceptance of the dogmas of the Church, but at times he did not discard what we should regard as superstitions. Like all men, however great, he belonged to his own generation, and if he had not the religious zeal of Father Joseph, he shared most of the Capuchin's beliefs. The writings to which we have already referred show that Richelieu attached some importance to the practice of magic arts. Presentiments and prognostics disturbed his mind, he gave heed to lucky and unlucky days, he feared that sorcerers and magicians might sometimes accomplish their ends. He had also a certain wavering belief in alchemy and astrology. An impostor named Boismaillé, who declared that he could turn base metal into gold, excited such confidence that he was allowed to make his experiments in the Louvre, in great secrecy, but in the presence of the King and the minister, who watched with eagerness for the result. Naturally it was unsatisfactory, and Richelieu vented his chagrin at becoming the victim of such folly, by turning over the unlucky charlatan

to the courts, where he was condemned for sorcery and coining false money, and speedily put to death.

The Cardinal seems to have reposed some confidence in supernatural revelations, and at the monastery of the Crucifixion a voice foretold for him the deliverance of Saint Jean de Losne. The revelation was applied to La Capelle and proved erroneous, but when the siege of Saint Jean de Losne was raised, the voice corrected the misapprehension, and said, "I did not name La Capelle." Thus the prophecy was fulfilled, apparently to Richelieu's satisfaction, for he dwells upon the truth of this revelation in a confidential letter to the King.

Such prophecies did not always prove trustworthy. Father Joseph had a strong tendency towards religious exaltation and was quite ready to believe in superhuman interposition. In 1638, one of the nuns of the Calvary saw in a vision Saint Omar captured by the French; this was repeated to the Capuchin, who used it as an argument to induce Richelieu to order the siege. Doubtless Father Joseph was sincere in his belief in the divine vision; how far it influenced Richelieu is less certain. At all events, the siege was undertaken and failed, and the Cardinal in his anger reviled his follower for urging the enterprise.

Like other men he was most apt to meditate on matters of religion when earthly affairs went ill, and during the disasters of the campaign of Corbie he experienced a genuine religious revival. He confessed and communicated with greater frequency. He

manifested his newly awakened zeal by composing his book entitled *The Best Method to Convert Heretics*, and by writing to his generals that, while freely exposing their bodies, they should take good heed that their souls were in no peril.

It was at Richelieu's instance that in the following year Louis XIII. solemnly dedicated France to the holy and glorious Virgin, whom he declared the special protector of the realm. The dedication was made by formal proclamation, and was accompanied by great religious ceremonies; a lamp, which should forever burn, was placed in Notre Dame in memory of the event, which was, moreover, to be celebrated by yearly processions. Richelieu himself endowed a lamp and a perpetual mass in the convent of the Crucifixion. But he seems to have gone beyond the religious feeling of his time. The dedication of the kingdom to the Virgin might have aroused patriotic enthusiasm two centuries before; a hundred years later such an act would have called forth the jests of unbelievers without arousing the zeal of the faithful. In 1638, it excited neither fervour nor contempt, but was viewed with indifference. Religious belief was still general, but the time was past when such an act appealed strongly to religious feeling.

In Richelieu's private papers are some curious illustrations of his dealings with his Maker. In 1611, when he was suffering from illness, we find this vow, which he took the pains to commit to writing:

"If it pleases the Divine Goodness by the intercession of the blessed Saint John to deliver me within eight days

from the extraordinary pain of my head which torments me, I will establish in my house at Richelieu a mass, which shall be celebrated every Sunday in the year, and I will give the chaplain an annual revenue of thirty-six livres for these masses, which are to be celebrated as thanksgivings."

It has been observed that in this vow we can recognise something of the imperious minister of the future: Richelieu wished to be cured and he wished to be cured in eight days; he dictated terms even to the Almighty. If born in barbarism, he would have been one of those savages who demand an advantage from the idol, and if they do not receive it forthwith break to pieces the useless deity. Apparently the headache was not satisfactorily cured, for there is no record of the establishment of the masses. Richelieu was exact in his bargains with God and man.

If he was often credulous, there were times when his good sense saved him from vulgar error. Anne of Austria was childless, and for many years devotees insisted that application should be made to one Isidore of Spain, a saint who had worked notable miracles in such cases, that he might exert himself in the Queen's behalf. But the Cardinal expressed doubts as to the success of the holy man's efforts. Possibly he did not wish that the position of the Queen, his enemy, should be strengthened by her becoming mother of an heir to the throne. At all events, the birth of the future Louis XIV., in 1638, removed the necessity for invoking the aid of the saint.

Richelieu's views on the question of witchcraft, and his conduct toward those accused of that crime, form an interesting chapter in his intellectual history. The belief in witchcraft was widespread; it was as prevalent in France as in most other European countries, and the punishment of supposed witches was frequent and severe. Yet, before Richelieu's day, some writers, more enlightened or more sceptical, had begun to question whether such a thing really existed. Montaigne discussed the question with acute and pleasing satire. The Renaissance, the Reformation, new discoveries in science and geography, had produced their influence in France, and many beliefs, accepted without question two centuries before, were now openly or secretly discarded. But the Catholic Church still denounced the damnable iniquity of witchcraft, and gave special heed to the discovery and punishment of this form of wickedness, and if the Huguenots disbelieved transubstantiation, they were quite ready to believe in sorcerers and demons. In the first half of the seventeenth century executions of witches were not infrequent, and witchcraft was one of the recognised forms of crime. Most of these cases attracted little attention; the accused were obscure and ignorant, and their fate excited no popular interest. But one trial was of so notable a character that Richelieu could not pass it by unnoticed.

Urbain Grandier was a priest of pleasing address and handsome person, the curé of the church of St. Peter in the little provincial city of Loudun; his abilities were considerable, but his character was

bad, and his gallantries involved him in numerous unseemly altercations. His enemies sought to have him deposed, but the Archbishop of Bordeaux was his friend, and through his influence Grandier was at last acquitted of the charges against him. All this made him a well-known character, and his handsome person, as well as his evil fame, might naturally excite the imagination of a body of ignorant nuns leading an idle and solitary life. At all events, in 1632, the inmates of the Ursuline Convent at Loudun began to be disturbed by alarming and persistent visitations; nocturnal apparitions constantly appeared to some of the nuns, and it was finally agreed that the tempter was Grandier, working with the aid of the Evil One. Some of the statements of the nuns were perhaps devised by Grandier's enemies, much, doubtless, was the result of hysterical excitement, assisted by ingenious suggestion; it is hard to separate the delusion from the fraud. Recourse was had to exorcism, and the special services adopted by the Church were used in the endeavour to expel the demon. They were attended with small success, and the zealous declared that only by Grandier's death could these unhappy girls be relieved from his unholy practices. The excitement was great and the matter was discussed at Paris almost as much as at Loudun. The Government could no longer disregard it, and at last a special court of magistrates was organised to try the offender. The judges listened to the evidence of the nuns, and they examined the priest to discover on him the marks of the Evil One, by which some

of the witnesses had identified him. The medical profession then, as now, was less credulous in such matters, but several physicians, after examining the inmates of the convent and hearing their tales, declared that they found, in the case of some of the nuns, proofs of possession by the Evil One. The Bishop of Poitiers stated that in his opinion the charge of magic was established, the doctors of the Sorbonne were consulted and reached the same conclusion. The utterances of such authorities strengthened the agitation, the magistrates decided that Grandier was guilty of the crime of magic, and the unfortunate priest was burned to death with the approval of the entire community. In their zeal, three monks undertook the duties of the executioner and kindled the flames at the stake.

It is interesting to consider how much importance Richelieu attached to all this gloomy nonsense. No one would have questioned it two or three centuries before, but there were many, even in France, who no longer believed in magical arts, or sought to discover on the persons of unfortunate victims the signs by which the Devil had marked them for his own. Certainly the Cardinal did nothing to save Grandier, but he might have thought that the victim was an unworthy and licentious priest, and there was no special reason for being disturbed about his fate. In some of his letters he speaks rather lightly of the visions of the Ursulines at Loudun, but in his memoirs he discusses the tragedy seriously, and seems to regard the crime as proved. He states that Grandier when executed

did not cast his eyes on the images of Christ or the Virgin, and refused to accept the crucifix offered him by a priest, thus showing the power which the Devil exercises over those who have voluntarily given themselves into his hands.

In his theological writings, Richelieu accepted the common beliefs as to magic and the direct interposition of the Evil One; he was apparently in full harmony with the doctrines of the Church. These doctrines then found acceptance among the magistrates almost as much as among the clergy. Many of the French parliaments, and among them the Parliament of Paris, at various times issued vigorous decrees against the damnable crime of magic. Not long before the trial of Grandier, two men, of whom one was a priest, were accused of attempting Richelieu's life by the use of charms and magical preparations. The Devil, so it was shown, had often appeared to them, but admitted that he could accomplish nothing against their enemy, because God kept special guard over him. Though their evil devices thus redounded to the Cardinal's glory, the court convicted the accused of magic and sentenced them to be burned.

But this phase of belief was waning, and such prosecutions became rare as the century advanced. One of the last formal protests against more enlightened views came from the judges of Rouen when, in 1672, Colbert ordered the magistrates to entertain no more accusations for witchcraft. The Parliament of Rouen protested that such indulgence was contrary, not only to God's law, but also to all

the precedents of French jurisprudence. Down to the time of the Revolution, the French magistrates, as a class, were as hostile to new ideas, either in Church or State, as were the clergy, and perhaps a little more so.

Though Richelieu was largely absorbed in questions of worldly policy, he always remembered that he was a priest; if his contests with Spain, his alliances with Sweden and German princes, were foremost in his mind, theological controversy, the condition of the Church, and his own position in it were by no means forgotten. We have alluded to the considerable amount of theological literature which he produced, and some of which he found time to indite during the most stormy years of his career. He was active in all questions of Church government; he sought to raise the standard of the clergy, and to choose fit men for high ecclesiastical positions.

His zeal for religion did not secure him favour at Rome, and from force of circumstances, rather than from choice, Richelieu became active in asserting the privileges of the Gallican Church. The overthrow of the Huguenot party and the capture of La Rochelle entitled the Cardinal, in his own judgment, to great rewards, and he was displeased at the indifference with which the Holy Father viewed his services. But Richelieu was too independent and too imperious to gain the good-will of the Roman curia. So far as the temporalities of the Church were concerned, he helped himself with a free hand; in an age of pluralists, he was a leviathan among

such offenders. It would take long to give a list of the various livings he held, with the most of which his relations were confined to drawing the emoluments; his income from them all amounted to the enormous sum of a million and a half yearly. But in the Church as in the State Richelieu, while he coveted money, coveted power more, and he was less successful in obtaining ecclesiastical offices that would increase his influence.

He took an active interest in the reformation of monastic life in France, and succeeded in having himself elected general superior of the monasteries of Cluny, Citeaux, and Premontré. In his hands these positions would not have been sinecures, and he greatly desired to fill them, but the Pope was apprehensive of conferring power on a man whose actions he could not control, and with a short-sighted jealousy refused the bulls, except for Cluny.

The prevalent disorders were rife at Cluny, and Richelieu did much to check them and to re-establish the strict rule of the Order. He did not favour an undue growth of the monastic orders, but he wished the monasteries to be seats of piety and learning and not of indolence and vice. The great awakening in monastic life, which exhibited its best fruit in such institutions as the Port Royal and La Trappe, was due to deeper causes than the influence of any politician, but Richelieu rendered it no unimportant aid.

"When I consider," he writes, "that in my early years the license was so great in monasteries both of men

and women, that one found only scandal and evil example in places where one sought for edification, I confess that I receive no little consolation in seeing that irregularity and vice are now rarer in such places than religious zeal was then."

The seventeenth century is the greatest era in the history of the Gallican Church. After the excesses of the League came a wholesome reaction; the Reformation had done its part in purifying the Church from which the reformers had separated, and these results were nowhere more apparent than in France. Doubtless the existence of a strong Huguenot party had its influence in stimulating the zeal of Catholicism; the Gallican Church was saved from the most serious danger to which a religious organisation can be exposed, the undisturbed possession of the flock.

There are many great names among those who took part in the good work, and the period was one which stimulated their activity; they were found because the time was fit for them. In 1611, the Oratory was founded, and it soon became a great force in the training of the higher clergy. St. Francis de Sales organised charity on a scale of almost unrivalled magnitude, and found followers in abundance to carry on the work he began. The monasteries were purified of abuses; not only were evil livers rooted out, but there was no longer any room for the indifferent and the indolent. The Cardinal's place in Church history is an honourable one; he did much toward correcting abuses and elevating the character of the clergy. In his testament

he states the qualities he sought in those he chose for bishops: they must be humble and charitable, with good courage, full of piety, zealous for the Church and the welfare of the soul. He preferred also that they should be of gentle birth. Only persons of rank, he said, were fitted to exercise the authority required in the episcopal office. Learned men, he writes, often make bad bishops because, from their low extraction, they are unfit to govern a diocese. At all events, the episcopate under Richelieu was for the most part composed of earnest and able men. There were few of them who resembled the worldly triflers or the profligate infidels who filled so many episcopal seats in the reign of Louis XV.

In the course of the Thirty Years' War, Richelieu sought an ecclesiastical office, which would have been more important than the generalship of any number of monasteries. Treves was allied with France, and the archbishop was a friend of the French. The Archbishop of Treves was one of the seven electors of the German Empire, and the office was filled by the promotion of the coadjutor at the death of the reigning elector. French agents began to exert themselves to procure Richelieu's election as coadjutor, and thus secure his succession to the electorate. If their plan could be carried out, the French prime minister might become a German prince, he would control the fortunes of an important German electorate, and be entitled to cast his vote in the choice of an emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Such a scheme was as novel as it was

bold, but Richelieu never hesitated in disregarding ancient political traditions. The reigning elector was favourable, or, if not, he dared make no opposition; the members of the chapter were reluctant, but it would have been strange if French influence, aided by French money, could not have procured their votes.

But here again Richelieu encountered the stubborn resistance of the Pope. His opponents declared that it would be monstrous if a French minister became the ruler of a German electorate; the partisans of established usages were shocked by the idea; it is not probable that even friendly German princes viewed with satisfaction the prospect of the wily Cardinal, backed by the power of France, becoming one of their number. At all events, these arguments were convincing with the Pope; he declared that by the rules of the Church the electorate could only be held by a German, that the election of Richelieu would be irregular and could not receive the papal sanction. Napoleon would not have been disturbed by the threat of papal fulminations, but Richelieu was a priest and a cardinal. He was not ready to defy the orders of the Pope, or to assume a position which could only result in his own excommunication; he acquiesced in the papal decree and abandoned his hopes of becoming a German prince.

Rumour constantly declared that the Cardinal, weary of these bickerings with Rome, considered the possibility of an open rupture, and that he cherished the dream of becoming the patriarch of

an independent Gallican Church. It is certain that he wished to be made perpetual legate of the papacy in France, and was bitterly disappointed when his desire was not gratified. After the surrender of La Rochelle, the victorious Cardinal might naturally have expected this honour. Cardinal Wolsey had been papal legate in England, Cardinal George of Amboise had been papal legate in France; Richelieu exercised a power equal to that of either of these statesmen, his services to the Church had been no less, and he was entitled to no less reward. In 1629, he made a solemn entry into Montauban, after his victories in Italy and Southern France, and among the devices which ornamented triumphal arches, the cross of a legate was seen, combined with the crown of a duke. The designs had been prepared by a follower, and it is not likely that he suggested future honours without the approval of him for whom they were intended. But the Holy Father never saw fit to entrust Richelieu with the authority of papal legate, which in his hands might be exercised with little regard for the papal will; the Cardinal duke did not bear the legate's cross.

Richelieu could have become papal legate and remained an obedient Catholic, but the position of patriarch he must have assumed in defiance of the papacy. "Every one," writes Grotius from Paris in 1638, "gives the fair dignity of patriarch to the prime minister." At times, Richelieu may have listened with complacency to rumours which declared that he would rule a Church acknowledging

no allegiance to the bishops of Rome. But he never forgot that he must limit his ambition, and his boldness was tempered by a clear judgment of what was feasible. It is not likely that he ever seriously contemplated a step that was sure to end in failure. It was impossible that a pope would willingly consent to the creation of a patriarchate in France; it was most unlikely that a pope could be forced to consent. The assumption of such a dignity, at the request of the Gallican Church, would have been revolt from Rome, and whatever were the Cardinal's own grievances, there was no popular discontent with the papacy; no body of active proselytes, aroused to action by religious abuses, would have assisted an effort to repudiate the papal authority. If Richelieu had seriously advocated such a measure, not even his power could have secured its succcess.

Discontented at the treatment he received at Rome, and active in defence of the rights of the Gallican Church, the Cardinal's relations with the papacy were rarely cordial and were often acrimonious. At times it seemed as if these quarrels might almost drift into actual schism. The Pope long refused to grant bulls to a large number of bishops appointed by the King. The situation grew steadily worse, the nominees were forbidden to yield to the demands for money which came from Rome, and the Cardinal threatened that if papal confirmation were much longer delayed, the incumbents would dispense with it altogether. But Urban VIII. had no desire to let this quarrel go too far; he knew

that Richelieu would not hesitate to execute his threats, and though the bulls were granted reluctantly, they came at last.

While the Cardinal was resolute in asserting the rights of the Gallican Church against the papacy, he was equally firm in asserting the rights of the State against the Gallican Church, and, in the latter years of his administration, he was involved in difficulties with the French clergy, as well as with the Pope. The controversy with the clergy was the familiar quarrel over their contributions to the State. The needs of the King were great, the Cardinal demanded liberal aid from the Church and threatened rigorous measures if it were refused.

Earlier in his career, he had advocated with zeal the immunities of his order. "The tribute which should be exacted from the clergy," he said before the States-General, "is prayer, and many believe that their tears and supplications are more efficacious than the money of the people or the arms of the nobles." His experience as a statesman had somewhat shaken his confidence in the efficacy of the Church's prayers, and he now demanded its money. Taxation is disagreeable to all and has been especially distasteful to the clergy; they denied the right of Cæsar to demand tribute from God, and while their exemption was always purchased by what was very inaccurately called a free-will offering, they were loath to grant the amount that the Cardinal demanded. The struggle ended, like similar struggles during all the centuries of French history, with the advantage on the side of

the Church. A few millions were voted, and the minister accepted them rather than continue a contest with such resolute opponents.

Richelieu sympathised with many phases of religious development, yet at times he figured as a persecutor of men who were doing valuable service, and such conduct reflects no honour on his career. If he sympathised with religious development when it proceeded in accordance with religious authority, he was impatient of bolder intellects, who recognised no authority but conscience. Therefore it was, that he viewed with ill-will those identified with the party of Jansenius, and treated with special harshness one of the first of the great men who made the name of the Port Royal illustrious.

The doctrines of Jansenism had not yet taken form in the famous Augustinus, but Jansenius was already a marked figure, and his severe doctrines attracted the early disciples of the Port Royal. He was a deep student, indifferent to the world, fitted by nature to wage theological warfare, keen in his intellect and intense in his beliefs; night and day, he said, he sought and prayed to find the one thing most to be desired—the truth. He likened himself to an exploding bomb, and such he proved to be in theology. His portrait reveals his character: the aquiline nose and square chin of a soldier, the meagre, bony face of a student, with a fierce moustache, which was not then thought unbecoming in a priest.

Richelieu had personal as well as theological grievances against Jansenius. In 1635, Jansenius

published the *Mars Gallicus*, one of the most bitter of the innumerable libels of which the Cardinal was the object. It made a strong impression on Richelieu, and in the memoirs which he indited long afterward, he took the trouble to refute the charges it contained. As a reward for his services as a pamphleteer, so it is said, Jansenius received from the Spanish Government the bishopric of Ypres.

The Abbé of St. Cyran had been one of the early friends of Jansenius, and they were bound together by similar beliefs and purposes. But St. Cyran had also been among those who assisted Richelieu in his advancement; he was attracted by the talents of the Bishop of Luçon, and believed him to be a man fitted to do great work for Church and State. Richelieu appreciated the strong intellect and vigorous character which made St. Cyran a leader of men, and, when he had attained to power, he sought to enlist the abbé among his followers. But the abbé was as impatient of control as the statesman; he did not hanker for worldly honours, and he was resolved to preserve for himself absolute independence of thought and action. "I chose a prison rather than a bishopric," he said, "for I knew the refusal of one would lead to the other, under a government that desired to be served only by slaves."

He was offered various livings; what was more tempting to such a man, on several occasions Richelieu expressed his willingness to promote him to the episcopate. He turned a deaf ear to all these prospects of advancement, and his refusal to accept

Richelieu's bounty irritated the Cardinal quite as much as any errors in his doctrines. He disliked a man whom he could not buy, and distrusted a man who in intellect yielded to no one in France, and in courage to no one in the world.

Moreover, the minister was not above the petty animosities of the theologian. "He was a great man," said Retz, "but he had the fault of not despising small things." In his own works Richelieu had defined the subtle doctrine of contrition as required in the confessional. Jansenius and St. Cyran held other views, and their advocacy of them was displeasing to Richelieu's pride in his theology. It was said that the Cardinal thought it necessary to support his own doctrines in order to secure the peace of mind of Louis XIII. The King declared that he regretted his sins when he sought absolution, but he acknowledged that his spiritual nature did not allow that intense grief for having forfeited God's love by evil actions, which the Jansenists thought necessary for forgiveness. "Louis did not love God," said a satirist, "but he greatly feared the Devil." The Cardinal felt that Louis must not be kept in a state of uncertainty and apprehension by any fine-spun theories of ill-advised theologians. At any rate, the first overt act in the long controversy with Jansenism was taken by Richelieu, and in 1638 St. Cyran was sent to Vincennes.

"I have done something to-day," said the Cardinal to a follower, "for which many will reproach me. I have ordered the arrest of the Abbé of St. Cyran. The

savants and the godly will make much ado, but I have the consciousness of having rendered service to the Church and the State. Many troubles and misfortunes would have been avoided if they had ordered the arrest of Luther and Calvin when they began to dogmatise."

It is unlikely that Richelieu really thought the Reformation would have been checked if Luther had been kept in jail, or that he expected to crush out Jansenism by holding St. Cyran a prisoner in the gloomy donjon of Vincennes, but he would not consent to his release. "Do you know of whom you speak?" he said to the Prince of Condé, who asked his pardon; "he is more dangerous than six armies." In Vincennes St. Cyran remained for almost five years, and his long confinement is a blot on the Cardinal's memory.

The abbé was widely known for the religious elevation of his character and for his unworldly piety. In 1641, Jean de Wert, the famous free-booter, was a prisoner at Paris. He witnessed the performance of *Mirame* at the Palais Cardinal, and many bishops also watched the splendid rendering of a play which gossip declared to be the Cardinal's own handiwork. When the prisoner was asked for his judgment he praised the performance, but he added that it seemed strange to him, in a Christian kingdom, to find the bishops at the comedy and the saints in prison.

St. Cyran was liberated after Richelieu's death. His followers of the Port Royal noticed with pious joy that the service for the day on which the Cardinal died contained these words, "The fear of the

Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened."

Though Richelieu sought to purify the Church from abuses, his own conduct was not always free from reproach. We have spoken of the great number of benefices which he held. In this there was indeed nothing that was then regarded as scandalous; there were few able to accumulate livings and benefices, who hesitated to do so to the fullest extent. Richelieu was a good churchman, but to derive wealth and power from the organisation to which he belonged was in full accordance with his views; he regarded apostolic poverty as out of place in the seventeenth century at the Court of Louis XIII.

Though not in advance of the ordinary morality of his time, he was not a man to outrage public sentiment by a scandalous bargain, and the manner in which he disposed of his bishopric is interesting because it indicates no special moral obliquity in him, it only illustrates practices that were regarded as fitting by those who claimed for themselves entire propriety of conduct. After he received his promotion to the cardinalate, he no longer cared to hold his bishopric. But the office represented a certain income, it had a commercial value, and the Cardinal no more thought of giving this away, except for a proper return, than of disposing of any other portion of his estate without being paid for it. The bargain for the sale of the bishopric was reduced to writing and preserved among his papers. Manifestly there was no more feeling of impropriety than

if he had agreed to sell a right of grazing, or a piece of pasture land. The bishopric was transferred to the Dean of St. Martin of Tours, who was probably a fit man for the position, but he paid for it its full value. The deanery of St. Martin and the abbey of St. Vast were to be given to Richelieu in exchange for the see of Luçon, and he was also to receive five thousand livres a year secured on the revenues of that bishopric. The abbey and deanery were worth seventy-three hundred livres a year as was stated, and the seller covenanted, as he would in a warranty deed of land, that they should be conveyed free of any charge or encumbrance. Ecclesiastical offices could not be actually disposed of by the incumbents, and it was therefore provided that the approval of the King and the Pope should be obtained, accepting the respective resignations, and making the nominations as agreed. Evidently neither Cardinal nor dean felt that there was any impropriety in bargaining for a sale of the bishopric. The dean believed that he was a proper man to be a bishop, and Richelieu thought so also. The Cardinal would not have made the trade with a man whom he thought unfit for the position, but, when his conscience was at rest in this respect, he got what he could out of the transfer of the dignity. Considering the complaints he often made of the poverty of his beggarly bishopric, he seems to have had somewhat the best of the deal. Probably the new bishop did not care to drive too hard a bargain with a Cardinal and an influential politician.

In another measure of his we find an illustration

of the religious sentiment of the time, and we see that Richelieu was not quick to be disturbed where others saw no evil. When the Pope was ill in 1637, Richelieu sent one hundred thousand livres to Rome to be distributed among the cardinals, as he says, "in order to acquire them for the King"—in other words, to buy their votes. There was nothing concealed, he has related the fact in his memoirs for the instruction of posterity. He would not have sold his own vote as a cardinal, but he saw no harm in buying the votes of others. If bribery is not unknown in the election of aldermen, it is pleasant to reflect that it is no longer a recognised institution in the election of popes.

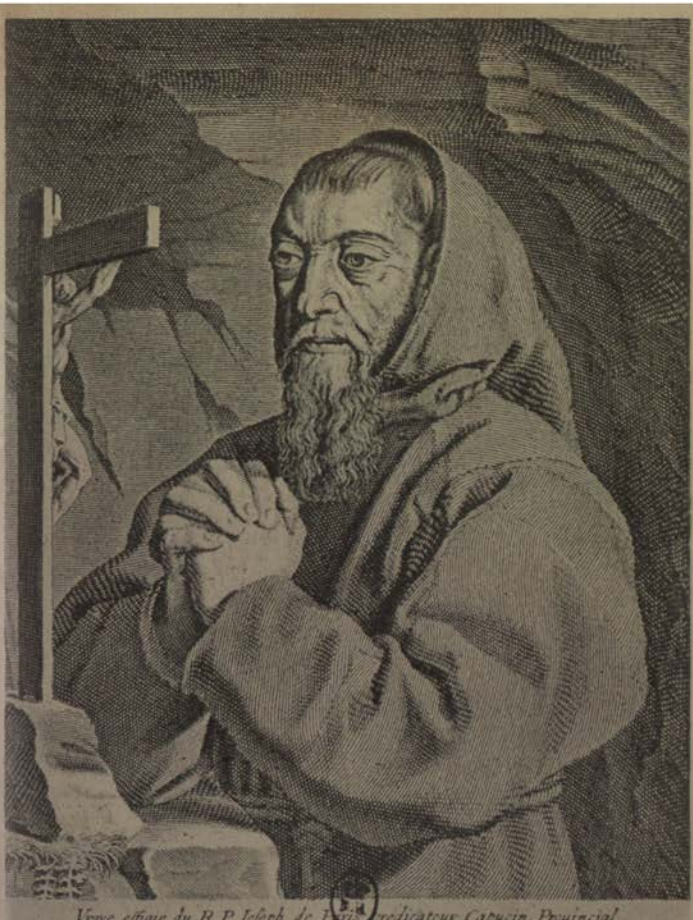
An account of Richelieu's relations with the Church would be incomplete without some sketch of the Capuchin monk whose name is so identified with his career in his lifetime and with his fame among posterity. Around the character and career of Father Joseph there has always been an air of mystery, a flavour of romance; in this subtle and indefatigable monk some have imagined the inspirer of Richelieu's policy, the power behind the throne. But the Cardinal found inspiration in his own genius, he was a man of greater intellect than Father Joseph, and it was he who determined the policy which the monk was always ready to carry into execution.

The man who became famous as Father Joseph belonged to the ancient parliamentary family of LeClerc, who added the name du Tremblay from a domain that had belonged to them since the fifteenth century. The château of Tremblay yet

stands, surrounded by an extensive park and a pleasant country, and though much changed and little improved, it is still an interesting example of seventeenth-century architecture. François LeClerc du Tremblay was born in 1577 and was eight years older than the statesman of whom he became so devoted a follower. He pursued the usual course of studies for a young man of the period, finishing his education at the University of Paris. In the confusion created by the wars of religion, the university had sunk to a low ebb, yet the young Le Clerc, when he completed his course at the age of seventeen, was not only thoroughly grounded in Greek and Latin, but he had acquirements still more useful in his career as a diplomat, for he spoke and wrote Spanish and Italian with ease and correctness. These studies were supplemented by the course at an academy, that was an indispensable part of a gentleman's education, and the future monk acquired proficiency in horsemanship, fencing, dancing, and military drill. A tour in Italy, for those whose means allowed such a luxury, was regarded as a sort of finishing school, and there LeClerc perfected himself in Italian and studied the traditions of diplomacy among those who were esteemed the most perfect masters of the art.

On his return he joined the Court of Henry IV., taking the title of Baron of Maffliers from one of the family estates, and, when twenty, he served with credit at the siege of Amiens. But the youth had a strong tendency towards a religious life; the calling of a priest, which Richelieu drifted into by

accident, his follower espoused from natural inclination. He willingly relinquished a life of pleasure, and, enrolling himself in the Order of St. Francis, chose the rigorous discipline and ascetic poverty of the Capuchins. In his twenty-second year he took the vows of the Order and became known as Father Joseph. He entered upon his calling with the enthusiasm of his nature. By its privations he was undisturbed. "When it is cold," he wrote his mother, "we warm ourselves by prayer. Our life is that of a soldier, but while some soldiers meet death in the service of man, we hope for life in the service of God." With his intense religious convictions was mingled some trace of mysticism, perhaps we may say of superstition. The man who later was the exponent of Richelieu's policy, even when it angered the Pope and alienated good Catholics, began his career by enterprises which endeared him to believers, but seemed foolishness to the worldly minded. Father Joseph combined, in curious mixture, intellectual qualities that seem far removed; he could have been an assistant of Peter the Hermit, and a follower of Godfrey de Bouillon, or he could have discussed political schemes with the most worldly and least believing of eighteenth-century prelates, and they would have found in him an adroit coadjutor. He was an astute and not altogether a scrupulous diplomat, doubled by a hedge priest. He could have met Metternich and Macchiavelli on their own field, yet there was in this trained politician an element of the country curé who retails wonders to the village gossips, of the


Vraye effigie du R.P. Ioseph de Paris predicateur Capucin, Prouincial
de Touraine superieur des missions estrangeres et de Poitou fondateur
des Religieuses de Caluaire A rendu lesprit entre les mains de ses
superieurs le 18 decembre 1638.

FATHER JOSEPH.

FROM THE ENGRAVING BY MICHEL LASNE.

Reproduced from Fagniez's "Le Père Joseph et Richelieu."

zealous fanatic who centuries before followed the motley forces of Walter the Penniless on their march to the Holy Land.

His zeal was early shown in the organisation of the convent of the Calvary, and in this he took a never-failing interest. However much occupied in framing instructions for ambassadors, or scheming with Richelieu for the abasement of the House of Austria, he always found time for the care and instruction of the nuns, whose director he was during life.

The number of those who sought retreat from the world was never larger in France than in the early part of the seventeenth century; eighty thousand women, it is said, were connected with religious establishments. Many doubtless were sincerely inclined to their calling, but the condition of the times helped to fill convents and monasteries. While some chose a religious life from piety, others were driven by necessity; in an era of civil war and political confusion, parents looked with favour upon a retreat where their children would be in safety; the superfluous daughters of noble families, for whom suitable matches could not be found and suitable dowries could not be provided, became the brides of the Church. Naturally there was much lowering of discipline in many religious institutions; the members were indeed excluded from worldly pleasures, but the rigorous rules of the Order were sadly relaxed; the sisters read novels, strolled in the conventual gardens, gossiped, lounged much, and prayed little.

This condition of affairs presently improved. After the excesses of the League and the disorders and scepticism of the sixteenth century came a season of awakening in the Gallican Church; the Oratory was founded, the character of the episcopate was elevated, the great preachers of Louis XIV. received their early training. At such a time new life was instilled into many monastic institutions, and laxity and indifference were succeeded by rigour and zeal. The spirit of reformation was felt in many of the religious retreats for women. The Port Royal, while the most famous, was only one among similar institutions in which fervent piety and rigorous discipline could be found.

There was hardly a noble family that had not some member consecrated to religion, and among them was Antoinette of Orleans, a princess of the blood royal, and already selected as successor to the aunt of Louis XIII., who was then the Abbess of Fontrevault. But Antoinette was rigorous in her practices, and the discipline of Fontrevault was much relaxed. The inmates did not want an abbess who was as illustrious for her austerities as for her birth, while she desired to found an institution that should become the home of those filled with her own zeal. Chance threw in her way Father Joseph, who was still an obscure Capuchin. The exalted piety of the princess found a response in the monk, and by their joint efforts the congregation of the Calvary was founded; the sanction of the Pope was obtained, the favour of royalty was secured, and the home of the congregation was at last established

by Mary de' Medici in the garden of the Luxembourg.

The exhortations of Father Joseph to the sisters, and his plans for their devotions, throw an interesting light upon his religious character. He marked out for them the themes in which their thoughts should each day be absorbed; thus the week would go its round in religious contemplation. Certain virtues were especially to be cultivated by the inmates, silence, humility, charity, seclusion, and prayer, and the merits acquired by their pains and prayers were to be devoted to the conversion of the heathen and the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre.

A man like Richelieu, eminently practical and more worldly than devout, could have taken but little interest in much of this. Yet, either from conviction or from a desire to please his follower, he was a fast friend of the Calvarians, and contributed liberally towards the construction of their buildings. To Father Joseph their intense devotion, their unquestioning faith, were congenial; his last public effort, when the hand of death was upon him, was an address to the sisters of the Calvary, and his tongue was not stayed by weakness, for he talked to them two hours and a half.

A project of larger importance than the reformation of a convent excited Father Joseph's ardour. It seems strange that the dream of a war for the redemption of the Holy Places should have possessed the mind of a highly educated Frenchman in the seventeenth century; that one of the most astute diplomats in Europe should have thought it possible

to unite warring nations in a crusade that would have for its object only God's glory. More than five hundred years had passed since Peter the Hermit preached before the council at Clermont, and even the pretence of assuming the cross had long been abandoned; kings had ceased to promise it, popes had ceased to demand it. But Father Joseph again undertook the enterprise in all sincerity, and he possessed such a combination of zeal and enthusiasm that even his knowledge of European rulers and politics did not make him despair of success. It was by his efforts to unite Christian nations against the Turk that he first made himself known in the world of politics and diplomacy.

An impulse to such a movement was given by an appeal, to which, two centuries later, Europe did not turn a deaf ear. A deputation of five Greek bishops came in behalf of their compatriots, and besought the aid of the Western powers in overthrowing Turkish tyranny and restoring liberty to Greece.

Both national and social sympathies were little developed in the seventeenth century; privileged classes viewed with small concern the sufferings of those removed from them socially; white men looked with approval on the trade in black men; the residents of London or Paris would have been undisturbed by reports of atrocities committed in Bulgaria or Armenia, and there was no likelihood of the European powers taking up arms in an unselfish endeavour to assist a downtrodden nationality; the religious fervour of the eleventh century had passed away, the active philanthropy of the

nineteenth century was unknown. But Father Joseph espoused the cause of Greek liberation as part of a scheme to drive the infidel, not only from Greece, but also from Palestine. A leader was found in the Duke of Nevers, a French nobleman, who presently inherited an Italian principality. Not only an ardent Catholic but a descendant of the Paleologi, the duke could assert ancestral claims to the throne of Constantinople, as well as gratify the spirit of adventure and obey the call of religion. The Order of Christian Militia was organised, whose mission it was to drive the Turk from the Holy Sepulchre, and Mary de' Medici headed a subscription for its benefit with a million two hundred thousand livres. But all this availed little, and for any chance of success it was necessary to obtain the support of some of the great powers.

In 1617, Father Joseph went to Rome to solicit the sanction of the Holy Father for the undertaking. He made the journey in conformity with the rules of his Order; each day he walked as far as the wretched roads would allow, subsisting on the charity which the pious extended to one who had renounced earthly goods. After many toils and privations, he at last reached Rome, and Pius V., who was then Pope, could not refuse the aid of the Church to an undertaking which, for centuries, the papacy had declared to be incumbent on Christianity. However doubtful of success, he instructed his nuncios to present the matter to the European powers and ask for their assistance.

In Spain, where Father Joseph went the following

year, he found less encouragement. The Spaniards were pious, but their rulers had no time to spare from European politics for the affairs of Palestine; the enterprise was as impracticable as it was praiseworthy, said the nuncio at Madrid. Nor was France any more zealous. The French had important commercial dealings with the East, they were a favoured nation at Constantinople, their relations with the Porte were amicable. The Queen-mother might subscribe liberally for the Christian Militia, but for the Government to give its sanction to a war against a friendly Sultan was another matter. Nor was the prospect more hopeful in Germany, where the Thirty Years' War was beginning, and the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire preferred fighting Protestants to fighting Turks.

The Duke of Nevers at last equipped a few ships and declared that he had twelve thousand men ready to sail, but the ships were taken by the French government to use against La Rochelle, and the troops never embarked. By 1625, both the Pope and Father Joseph admitted that circumstances demanded an indefinite adjournment of the project. Yet to the end of his long political career, the Capuchin clung to the vision of a crusade against the Turk, and believed it to be the only means of restoring peace to Europe. "The only way to establish peace with Austria," he wrote in 1635, "is to make war upon the Turk." "When we have made a general peace," he writes again, "in order to maintain it, we must begin war with Turkey."

Richelieu and Father Joseph met early in life,

and the Capuchin seems to have fallen at once under the spell of the ambitious young politician. Although the older man of the two, he enrolled himself as a devoted follower, content to advance the fortunes of his leader, and satisfied if he met his approval. The close relations which grew up between them were never disturbed during all the vicissitudes of Richelieu's career. Father Joseph was active among those who demanded Richelieu's recall from exile, and, when the Cardinal became prime minister, the Capuchin was soon recognised as the man most in his confidence. Thus far he had been known as a religious enthusiast, a man who sympathised with mystics and dreamed of crusades. He enlisted in the service of a statesman who made war upon the Holy Roman Emperor, and was viewed askance by the Holy Father. But the follower never wavered in his zeal, no matter what his leader's policy might be.

In 1630, he attended the council and diet at Ratisbon as Richelieu's representative, and exercised his adroitness in the confused field of German politics. "This poor Capuchin," the Emperor is reported to have said, "has disarmed me with his capulet, and found room to store away six electoral hats in his monk's hood." The treaty, to which the ambassador agreed, was disavowed by Richelieu as unwise and unauthorised, but a rebuff, which would have ended most diplomatic careers, in nowise affected the favour in which the negotiator was held by the minister. If it seemed expedient to disavow Father Joseph's acts, he bore the affront with

equanimity, so long as he enjoyed the approval of his chief. It is not often that a man possessed of such ability is willing to devote his life with unquestioning submission to the service of another, indifferent as to worldly reward or public repute.

At the Palais Cardinal there was a place assigned to the Capuchin, and he acted as secretary of state of foreign affairs without the title. In indefatigable industry he did not yield to his principal; even on his sick-bed he received foreign ambassadors, and discussed questions of State with them until he could talk no longer. "I found Father Joseph very ill," writes a diplomat to the Duke of Savoy, "because he will not cease his constant labour. . . . I left him exhausted after having discussed negotiations all the day long, stretched out on his monk's cot." When he could not be found, it was a sure sign that he had business of such importance as to admit no interruption. ". . . We have been hunting Père Joseph these five or six dayes . . . but hee is not to be found by any man, neither in the towne nor att Ruelles, which is an argument that there is some great dispatch in hande," so runs an English letter. When he took refuge from constant toil, it was usually among his followers of the Calvary, and he sought in religious meditation some diversion from European politics.

While always ready to follow where Richelieu led, the Capuchin occasionally saw a convenient opportunity to suggest religious considerations to a leader, often too much absorbed in worldly matters to give sufficient heed to the welfare of his soul.

Amid the disasters of the year 1636, when Corbie was in the hands of the Spanish, and Paris was threatened, it is said that even Richelieu's constancy was for a moment shaken, and that his assistant exhorted him to meet misfortune with courage. This is unlikely, but it is certain that Father Joseph used those days of disaster to excite the religious zeal of the minister, and that his efforts were not wholly unsuccessful.

The Capuchin's nearest approach to disgrace was after the unfortunate failure of the siege of St. Omer. The failure was indeed due to the incapacity of the generals to whom the undertaking had been intrusted, but Father Joseph had urged the enterprise, and he had sought to overcome Richelieu's hesitation by declaring that Heaven had foretold his success; one of the Calvarian nuns had seen in a vision the surrender of the town and had imparted the revelation to her director. The revelation proved to be false, Richelieu was greatly irritated, and Father Joseph for a while seems to have held aloof from worldly affairs. But he was soon back at his work, apparently with undiminished credit, and thus he continued until death closed his labours. His activity increased rather than diminished. Daily he prepared for the Cardinal's use a *résumé* of the great mass of diplomatic correspondence, and of his own interviews with foreign ministers. Early in the morning he was at the Cardinal's bedside, and late at night he was still with him, discussing the innumerable questions to which each day gave rise.

Father Joseph was older than Richelieu, but the Cardinal's health was infirm and his sudden death would have caused little surprise. He was not blind to his condition, and was free from any weak reluctance to consider who could best carry out his policy when he should be no more. There was little doubt that his choice would have fallen on Father Joseph, although there is much doubt if the choice would have been a judicious one. The Capuchin possessed untiring energy and unusual diplomatic skill, but when no longer guided by Richelieu's good judgment he might easily have wandered into political vagaries. Notwithstanding the weaknesses of Mazarin's character, he was better fitted to carry out with success the policy which Richelieu had devised. In 1635, Grotius wrote that if Richelieu should pass away, there could be no doubt that Father Joseph, on account of his extreme rascality, was destined to succeed to the Cardinal's place. But Grotius loved neither the minister nor his follower.

Father Joseph was not destined even to become a cardinal. There was no truth in the story that Richelieu was faint-hearted in seeking this honour for his follower. The great minister was loyal to those who were loyal to him and was above all petty jealousies, but the Pope was willing to indulge his grudge against both Richelieu and Father Joseph by refusing the promotion. He had a plausible excuse. A Capuchin was bound to renounce earthly honours, and the pomp and state of a cardinal were unfitting in one who had taken the

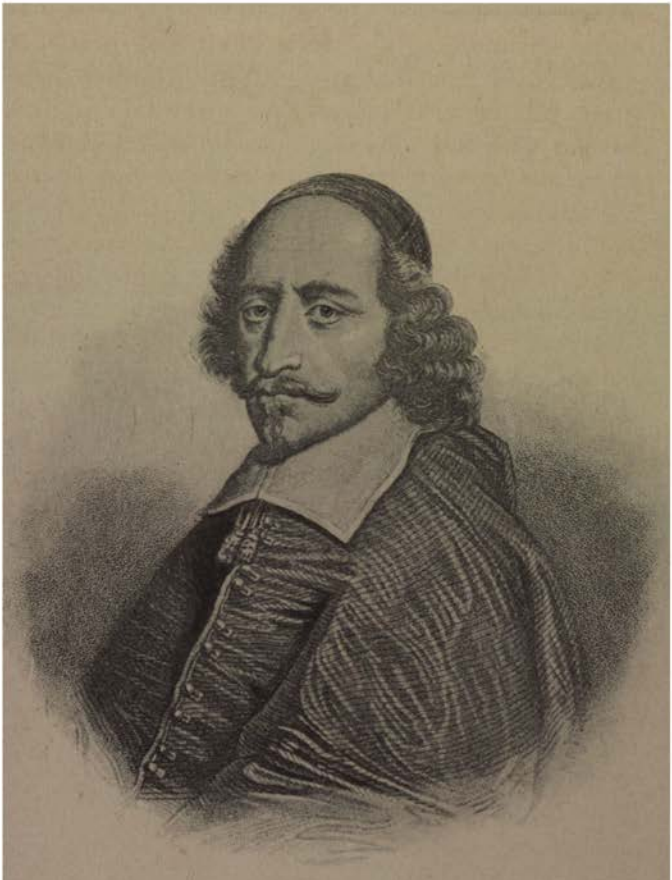
vows of poverty and humility. However commendable was this position, it had often been disregarded, and another Capuchin then sat in the College of Cardinals. But there were other reasons for the papal obduracy. Richelieu was not loved at the Vatican, he had not been submissive to the wishes of the papacy, his policy had often placed him in an attitude of avowed hostility to the Pope. Father Joseph was not only a priest, but he was a member of an order bound by their vows to be faithful and zealous servants of the Holy Father, yet he had been the eager advocate of Richelieu's policy, even when this was condemned by faithful Catholics.

Many of his own order also were indifferent to his promotion. Since he had been a member of the Government, he had neglected the simple and salutary rules prescribed to him as a monk; he lived in Richelieu's palace and shared in its pomp and luxury; on the pretence of his health he had obtained a dispensation by which he was allowed to use money, a thing forbidden members of the Order, who were bound to subsist wholly on charity; he rode in carriages instead of walking, he ate rich viands, he was served on silver plate at the Cardinal's board.

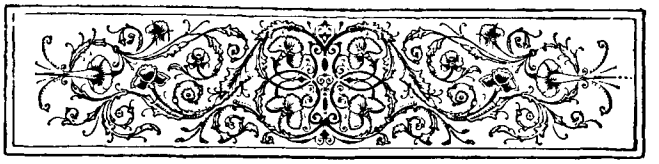
Notwithstanding the ill-will of the Pope, the honour would at last have been bestowed. France, as a Catholic power, had the right to demand the nomination of a certain number of cardinals. Although Father Joseph was passed by in various promotions, the French representatives continued

their solicitations, and in 1638 it was said that Urban VIII. had at last agreed to grant their request. If the promise was sincere, it came too late. In that year Father Joseph was stricken with apoplexy and it was clear that he had not long to live. He was himself unwilling that a cardinalate, granted at the request of the French King, should be bestowed on a dying man, whose promotion would be of no value to his country.

Accordingly, the French ambassador at Rome informed the Pope that the nomination was withdrawn, and that the fatal illness of Father Joseph would prevent his filling an office for which he was so well fitted. Mazarin was already committed to the interests of France and had been active in working for Father Joseph's promotion. The nomination which the Capuchin declined was transferred to the fortunate young Italian, and in 1641 the honour was conferred on him. At the age of thirty-nine Mazarin received a Cardinal's hat, for which so many laboured a lifetime in vain; his career of extraordinary success was fairly begun.



CARDINAL MAZARIN.



CHAPTER XI

LIFE AT THE PALAIS CARDINAL

THE cares of State, plans for campaigns, instructions to ambassadors, plots to frustrate his enemies' plots, that were ever pressing on Richelieu, would have exhausted the energy of most men, but he found time for other things. The part he took in the literature of the day, the buildings he erected, his efforts to establish his family among the great French nobility, all deserve attention.

The Cardinal had a taste for building which he shared with many French sovereigns; he was fond of imposing surroundings, and liked to dwell in palaces. The ancestral château of Richelieu he rebuilt with great magnificence; but, although he cherished a strong attachment for the seat of his family and the home of his early years, he had little opportunity to visit it. At Paris he erected for himself a palace that he afterwards gave to the King, and which was not unworthy to be the home of royalty. Of the Palais Cardinal, afterwards the Palais Royal, some portions still remain and form

part of the great collection of buildings now known by that name. There the Cardinal lived for many years, and there he died.

He chose a site near the Louvre, in a quarter where there was room for extensive grounds. It is now in the very heart of Paris, but at that period there were few buildings in the vicinity, and open fields stretched to the city walls. The present Rue des Petits Champs (the Street of the Little Fields) commemorates the condition of this portion of the city when Richelieu chose it for his residence.

On the site of his palace formerly stood one of the most famous of Parisian houses. In the early part of the century the Hôtel Rambouillet was as celebrated a rendezvous of wits and littérateurs as was the Holland House two centuries later. The salon was presided over by the famous Marquise de Rambouillet, whose praises were sung by all the poets of her day, and it was one of the first of the Parisian salons which was open to the aristocracy of brains as well as to the aristocracy of birth. The marquise herself designed the residence, and it formed an epoch in domestic architecture and decoration. She discarded the sombre hues, the dark and cheerless rooms of feudal buildings. Windows were made larger, the interior arrangement was more convenient. Red and tan had been the almost universal colours for interiors, and a prodigious sensation was produced in society when Mme. de Rambouillet threw open to her guests the blue chamber, furnished in blue velvet and adorned with

gold and silver decorations. In the blue chamber the wits met, and it was celebrated by the famous Voiture, as well as by lesser luminaries.

The influence of the Hôtel Rambouillet on the literature of the early part of the seventeenth century was considerable, and it was valuable in checking the coarseness and vulgarity that were common in the preceding generation. Perhaps the taste of the society which gathered there tended to over-elaboration; they delighted in ingenious conceits, and used language not far removed from that of the *Précieuses Ridicules* whom Molière satirised. Letters, as well as politics, were revolutionised under Richelieu, and the conceits of the Hôtel Rambouillet seem feeble when compared with the stately verses of Corneille or the vigorous satire of Molière.

At all events, the Cardinal bought the hotel, paying for it, and for the delightful grounds by which it was surrounded, ninety thousand livres. The price of such a residence, within almost a stone's throw from the Louvre, illustrates the difference in the value of money. The sum Richelieu paid for the fee would be little more than the annual rental of the property to-day. Apart from the increase in the value of the land, it would to-day cost to build such a residence as then stood upon it, ten times the amount that Richelieu paid. He bought it to tear down, and two other residences were also demolished to make room for the Palais Cardinal. In the rear, extensive and beautiful gardens were laid out on ground which is now covered by the buildings

of the Palais Royal. The growth of this part of the city soon led to the removal of the old city walls, and in 1633 new walls were placed along the lines marked by the boulevards of modern Paris.

On the embellishment of his palace Richelieu expended vast sums of money. It was a fit residence for kings, and he cherished the ambition that by kings only should it be occupied in future ages. It was a condition of the gift to Louis XIII., so the instrument read, that the property should be inalienable, "the intention of the Cardinal being that it shall serve as a residence for his Majesty and his successors, or for heirs of the Crown, having built this palace at such expense with that design."

The desires of the Cardinal as to his property did not control its future use, and the provisions of the gift were not observed. The Palais Royal in time came into the possession of the Orleans, the younger branch of the royal family, and by a slow process of decline it has changed its form and use until, instead of a home of kings and cardinals, it has become the headquarters of keepers of restaurants and sellers of cheap jewelry.

Rueil was the Cardinal's country seat, where much of his time was spent. There, also, he erected a superb château, around which a village grew up, whose inhabitants largely found their occupation in the needs of the great manor and the extensive hospitality which its owner extended. The pomp by which he was surrounded equalled that of many a petty sovereign. In the height of his power, his expenses were estimated at four million livres a

year, quite as much as an annual expenditure of four million dollars in our day. Such an establishment was not that of a private man, but of a prince. He had four companies of horse-guards in his service, the equals of any in the army; on his pay-roll were diplomats, artists, and writers, to whom he granted pensions out of his own resources.

It was not alone in erecting palaces for his own use that the Cardinal occupied himself. He was strongly attached to the Sorbonne; there a portion of his early life had been spent, there his first successes were gained, he had been chosen grand master of the institution, and in his ecclesiastical disputes, which were numerous, he could always rely on the faithful support of its members. He showed his appreciation by constructing the college buildings and church which still stand, and are used practically as they were in Richelieu's days. It was at his own request that his remains were laid in the church of the Sorbonne. A charity which perhaps interested him as much as his gifts to the Church and the monks was an establishment for the education of twenty young gentlemen who, as a condition, were bound to serve in the King's army.

It was at his city residence that the most of Richelieu's life when prime minister was spent. It answered the purpose alike of a private residence and of a public office. There his secretaries were found, ambassadors were received, and the work was done which would now be performed in the official buildings reserved for the use of the prime minister or the secretary of foreign affairs. There

also the great fêtes were given in which he delighted, and there were held the literary meetings in which he took part.

His life was laborious, and the Palais Cardinal was filled with a changing crowd, who came to receive instructions, to impart information, to obtain favours or volunteer advice, all eager to converse with the chief personage in European politics. Richelieu took little outdoor exercise, and he had stipulated that his infirm health should excuse him from the constant attendance upon the King ordinarily expected of a minister. There was, therefore, little to interrupt the daily routine of toil. In the morning, the Cardinal looked over and signed his voluminous correspondence ; foreign ministers were received, confidential agents and the host of people who had business with the minister, or wished to have. Sprinkled among the crowd was always a goodly number of ecclesiastics, for he was fond of employing those of his cloth. The secretaries of state had their interviews, the private secretaries received dictations, and all day long the work went on. Almost every evening the Cardinal spent an hour or two in conference with Father Joseph, sometimes discussing religion, and more often discussing politics.

Of private life, there was none. Except his niece, the Cardinal rarely had any of his family living with him. He might have said, " I am the State," and he might also have said that he had no other existence. He kept a considerable force of secretaries, whose services certainly were not overpaid, no matter how much they received. His

question. It is certain that when the Cardinal was angry, he swore with much vehemence. Lenet writes, speaking of Richelieu's troubles with the young Duke of Enghien: "I have learned from those who were witnesses of his anger, that the great man lost all control of himself and swore so terribly that they were filled with horror." Such scenes were not rare.

Richelieu was fond of a profuse hospitality; the ordinary routine of work was often broken by fêtes, in which the minister displayed his wealth and his splendour. In 1639, the successes of the French armies were celebrated with great pomp. "Felicity" was the word which furnished the theme for the ballet, that was presented with much magnificence. In it were portrayed the misfortunes of the past, the joys of the present, and the bliss of the future. This ballet was performed at St. Germain, at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, and at the Palais Cardinal, and Richelieu paid one-third of the entire expense. The representation at his palace did not yield to the others, and in one respect it exceeded them. The Cardinal used priests not only as generals and admirals but as impresarios; the Bishop of Chartres took charge of the ballet and with entire success.

In the winter of 1640, further victories were celebrated at the Palais Cardinal with equal splendour, and the prosperity of the armies of France furnished the theme of a ballet. The devices and machines used in the ballet excited much wonder; they represented sunrise, the plain of Casale covered with

snow, and, most imposing of all, the heavens opening and Jupiter appearing upon his throne.

In January, 1641, the tragedy of *Mirame* was presented with even greater magnificence, at a cost, it was said, of over two hundred thousand crowns. The play was given under the name of Desmarets, but it was thought to be the work of the minister himself. It is probable that he took some part in its composition, and it is certain that *Mirame* is a very second-rate play, whoever was its author.

But, if there was question as to the merits of the play, there was none as to the splendour of the representation. For some years artisans had been working at the great hall for theatrical entertainments in the wing of the Palais Cardinal. Mazarin often combined with his diplomatic duties the execution of commissions in the purchase of works of art and luxury, and he was now charged with procuring in Italy scenery and theatrical machinery for the great occasion. No theatrical exhibition ever seen in France could be compared with the first representation of *Mirame*, before an audience in which were found the King and Queen, and almost every one of rank and prominence. From this select assemblage the play obtained a success, which was in part due to the beauty of the setting, and in part to the well-founded belief that the name of the author was not Desmarets, but Richelieu.

When the curtain rose, so the chronicler tells us, there was disclosed a view of delightful gardens, ornamented with fountains, statues, and grottos, with terraces overlooking a sea, the movements of

which seemed real water; and upon the sea two fleets manœuvred, one of which appeared to be at least two leagues distant from the audience. In these days of spectacular display, we are unmoved by such effects, but they were regarded as marvellous achievements two hundred and fifty years ago. When the play was over, a gilded bridge was thrown to the feet of the Queen, she passed over, accompanied by the princes and princesses, and, on the stage, now converted into a magnificent salon, began the dance.

In 1639, a comedy of Scudery was acted by children, and among them, strangely enough, was the young Jacqueline Pascal, then fourteen years of age, a sister of Blaise Pascal, and herself destined to be one of the famous inmates of the Port Royal. She acted with much success, and Richelieu rewarded her efforts by forgiving her father for some act of contumacy by reason of which his arrest had been ordered.

Besides representations of plays, there were frequent literary gatherings at the Palais Cardinal, the recitation of new poems, the reading of new books, which were submitted to the taste of the Cardinal and the judgment of the members of the Academy.

The Palais Cardinal was not only the home and the bureau of the prime minister, it was the scene of much of interest in literary history. Amid all the cares of State, with half a dozen armies in the field, with the Queen-mother plotting for his overthrow, and Gaston listening to schemes for his assassination, the Cardinal found time to give to

literature as much attention as many who had nothing to do but write books.

The Cardinal was fond of literary discussion, and still more fond of literary production. "What do you think I enjoy most?" he said to an acquaintance. "To insure the happiness of France," replied the discreet courtier. "No," said the Cardinal, "to write verses." If this was said in jest, there was at least a grain of seriousness in it.

A desire for literary fame, without the possession of literary talent, has been often charged as a weakness of the great minister. It is hard to say wherein this was a weakness. The Cardinal was fond of books, a generous and not an unintelligent patron of literature. He was not a great writer, and the respectable position to which he was entitled as an author was eclipsed by his fame as a statesman. But Richelieu's style, both in his correspondence and in his *Memoirs*, often rises to a high level; it is vigorous, terse, and bears the imprint of a great man. In addition to his public duties, he found time to dictate the voluminous *Memoirs*, which are the most valuable source of information as to his career. Often, indeed, they are filled with lengthy instructions sent to an ambassador, with long exhortations addressed to the King, and become wearisome to the reader; but they give the Cardinal's own story of his work and his policy, and they do so substantially in his own words. He took the interest in telling of his achievements which is not infrequent among men of action. "It is more satisfactory," he writes, "to furnish the matter of history

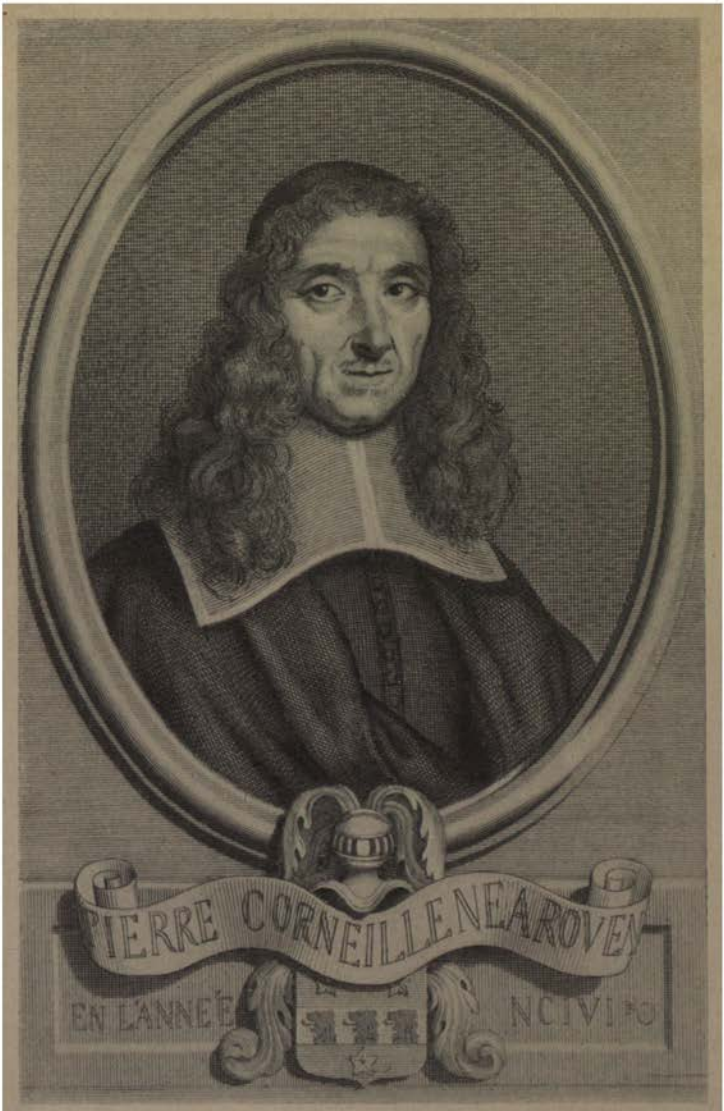
than to narrate it, and still there is no small pleasure in relating that which has been accomplished with much pain."

None of his productions have received as much attention as the *Political Testament*, in which the Cardinal left his advice to posterity concerning the theory and details of French administration. The authenticity of this work has been one of the moot questions in French history. Voltaire, whose critical sense was acute, insisted that Richelieu had no part in the work. "It was unworthy of the great statesman," said the great critic; "a collection of commonplaces, the creation of some compiler, who stole Richelieu's name to cover his own emptiness." It is generally admitted that Voltaire was wrong, and while the *Political Testament* is not a work which compares favourably with the *Spirit of the Laws*, there is little doubt that Richelieu inspired it, even if the actual work of composition may have been left to subordinates. If there is nothing novel in the work, it is for the most part sensible; the remedies suggested are palliatives rather than cures; but Richelieu's influence on French administration was due more to energy of purpose than to originality of mind.

He was less successful when he abandoned his despatches and his *Memoirs* to engage in creations of the imagination. The Cardinal had a strong taste for the stage; not only was he interested in dramatic work, but he had an itching to try his hand at dramatic composition. There was at the palace a corps of literary as well as of political workers, and

the correction of rhymes alternated with the dictation of despatches. Frederick II. found relief amid disaster in writing bad poetry, and Richelieu turned from the mingled success and defeat of the Thirty Years' War to criticise metres and discuss the unities.

Those who became known as the five poets were regularly employed in the literary branch of the administration; they criticised the productions of others and turned out productions, for the most part very bad, of their own. Their most important work, in Richelieu's estimation, was in aiding him in his efforts at dramatic composition. He liked to outline the play, to devise the plot, to prescribe the sentiments and dramatic situations, and leave it for the assistants to give the necessary literary polish. He wished to block out the model and let others finish the work. The results of such efforts were not important in literary history, and the poets of the Palais Cardinal are chiefly interesting because a great poet was for a while one of their number. In 1634, Pierre Corneille brought himself to Richelieu's attention by composing a Latin ode that was recited at the Cardinal's reception at Rouen. He was already somewhat known, and presently he became one of the five poets, and for a while resided in Richelieu's literary household. But the great dramatist was as imperious in literature as the Cardinal was in politics, and their relations were not long continued. Still, Richelieu is identified with Corneille's literary career, and did somewhat to assist in its success. When the *Cid* appeared, it



PIERRE CORNEILLE.

FROM AN OLD PRINT.

was dedicated to Richelieu's niece, and was twice acted in Richelieu's palace. It was too bold an innovation on accepted models to meet the Cardinal's approval, and, at his suggestion, the play, over the merits of which fierce discussion arose, was submitted to the judgment of the newly organised French Academy. The opinion of the Academy was unfavourable, yet the *Cid* remains after more than two centuries one of the masterpieces of the French stage. Though Corneille quitted the Cardinal's employ, he did not altogether lose his good-will; he not only received a pension from the Government, but Richelieu rendered him more valuable service, for he interfered in his behalf, and induced the parents of Mademoiselle de Lampérière to withdraw their opposition to her marriage with the poet.

In 1635, Richelieu organised one of his most famous and most enduring creations. For several years a number of men prominent in letters had met, usually at the house of Valentin Conrart, and discussed questions of literary interest. Possibly the Cardinal was jealous of a body capable of exercising a certain influence in literature and independent of his authority, and doubtless he thought that such an organisation could do more important work if it were placed under the royal protection. In 1635, letters patent converted this informal assembly into the French Academy, under the protection of Cardinal Richelieu, who was to frame its statutes. The number of members was fixed at forty; they were granted various immunities, and were to prepare a dictionary, grammar, and rhetoric, which would be

the code of the French language. Most of the original members were officials whose claims to literary distinction were moderate, and the work with which the body was intrusted remains incomplete after two centuries.

Nevertheless, the influence of the Academy on French literature has been great and has been valuable. One cannot question the *raison d'être* of an organisation which has already lasted for two hundred and fifty years. Kings and emperors have come and gone, the Bourbon monarchy has perished, the old *régime* has passed away, Napoleons have flourished and fallen, but the French Academy has survived monarchies and empires and republics; its membership is still the honour most prized by French writers, its influence on French literature is unabated, its favourable judgment has lost none of its value. Few creations of any statesman have more successfully resisted the changes that the centuries bring.

We have had occasion to notice the opposition of the courts to all innovations, and curiously enough the Parliament of Paris made a determined resistance to the organisation of the Academy. It would seem that the judges might have viewed with indifference this body of littérateurs, the most of whom they probably regarded as scribblers and second-class poets of small social importance. Their animosity was perhaps excited by the fact that the Academicians could insist that actions to which they were parties should be tried before the masters of requests, and thus infringed on their judicial

functions. Richelieu was always resolute in forcing the judges into obedience, but it was only after two years' delay and repeated orders from the King that the Parliament very sulkily registered the edict by which the Academy was created. One of the judges satisfied his spleen by declaring that the time wasted on such a subject could only be compared with the deliberations of the Roman Senate on the proper sauce for a turbot.

There were among the early Academicians some men renowned in their day, though their fame, like that of many other immortals, has grown dim in the centuries. Balzac was declared one of the great luminaries of literature, whose writings would charm the world from pole to pole. They did not penetrate such remote regions even in his lifetime, and now they charm nobody. Yet he was a critic of fair capacity, and if he accomplished no great work himself, he did something to improve prose composition, and prepare the way for those who could do great work.

Voiture was another of the original members of the Academy, and was also famous in his own day. He was a clever writer of clever verses that were full of pretty things and not wholly destitute of amusing things. He was beloved in the fashionable society of the time, and a lady uttered the justest criticism ever pronounced upon him, when she said that he ought to be preserved in sugar.

On the whole, literature flourished better under Mazarin who neglected it, than under Richelieu who patronised it. The Cardinal loved to pose as a

Mæcenas, and he desired that France should be great in letters as well as in arms, but the authors whom he preferred were for the most part second-rate men. Even if his protégés were not all geniuses, his rule helped to develop the writers who were to become famous under his successor. The heroism of his character, the vigour and determination with which he ruled the State, furnished more stimulus to literature than the criticism of his "five poets."

If there were little value in the critical dicta which Richelieu pronounced, there was an inspiration in the era of which he was the central figure. It was a time of intellectual activity; whatever were the Cardinal's errors, there was an element of lofty ambition, of unwearied energy and dauntless courage, which impressed the world. Great wars were waged, great schemes were unfolded, great ambitions were cherished; it was an era of unrest and high resolve, in which an active and an artistic mind could find inspiration. Molière, Pascal, Rochefoucauld, and Retz were all young men during the administration of the Cardinal. Corneille produced his greatest plays while Richelieu was prime minister. Descartes also did much of his work during Richelieu's lifetime, but his course was unaffected by the political life of France. He left his country when a young man and sought a peaceful refuge in Holland; the subtile air of Paris, so he declared, inclined the brain to vanity, and he abandoned it for cloud and fog. The value of his metaphysical work is questioned by those who doubt whether any metaphysicians have

PRINCE OF CONDÉ.

and there attained a certain influence; when the younger brother was first exploring the intricacies of Court politics, Henri was able to be of some assistance to him. But the showy and popular soldier soon became a person of secondary importance when compared with the young bishop. He did not live to share the great fortune secured for the family of Richelieu. In 1619, when the Bishop of Luçon was in semi-exile with the Queen-mother, Henri had a quarrel with the Marquis of Thémines. They had no ground for dispute except some unfriendly criticism, but that was quite enough in those days. They soon found an opportunity, and fought with the ferocity which characterised most duels. Thémines at last drove his sword through the heart of his opponent, and the heir of the house of Richelieu thus met his end. He left no children, and as the second brother was a monk and an imbecile, the Bishop of Luçon became the head of the family and succeeded to the family estates, which were indeed of no great value.

It was Alphonse, the second brother, who felt conscientious scruples about holding the see of Luçon, and retired to pious obscurity at the Grande Chartreuse. There he would have spent his days in tranquillity had it not been for the extraordinary fortune of the third brother. Family feeling was strong in the Cardinal and he obtained for Alphonse ecclesiastical promotion, for which he was little fitted and which he did not especially desire. The minister took the would-be monk from the monastery, made him Archbishop of Aix, and afterward

Archbishop of Lyons, and finally secured his promotion to the cardinalate. Thus two brothers were members of the College of Cardinals, a thing of rare occurrence. Mazarin also obtained a cardinal's hat for his brother, and as Mazarin was little loved at Rome and the brother very unfit for the place, the dignity was only procured by the expenditure of millions of French money. Little could be said against Richelieu's brother except that he was a fool, and his promotion was secured without recourse to any unseemly measures. He was a charitable man and made a respectable bishop. Occasionally his eccentricities developed into temporary insanity, and among other delusions he sometimes imagined that he was God Almighty. Notwithstanding such vagaries he led an inoffensive life, and was so soon forgotten after his brother had passed away that his death, in 1653, excited almost as little attention as if, instead of being an archbishop and a cardinal, he had remained a monk in the Grande Chartreuse.

Richelieu advanced the fortunes of his kinsfolk, because his family pride was strong, and he wished that those in whose veins ran the blood of the Richelieus should hold a place among the great nobility of the land. For his niece, Mme. d' Aiguillon, who lived with him during the days of his power, he had a sincere affection; apparently he entertained for her a stronger fondness than for any other human being. She was a woman of beauty and of parts, who married a respectable gentleman for whom she had little affection. He was presently

killed, and, more perhaps from the fear of having to marry some other man no more to her taste than from any strong devotion, his widow took refuge in a Carmelite convent. When her uncle became prime minister, he wished her to share his home, and this prospect was not displeasing to her. A cardinal can usually find opinions on questions of casuistry to suit his taste, and it was decided by the canonical doctors that his niece's vows were not binding. She endowed the Carmelite convent and abandoned it for the Palais Cardinal. Her uncle made her a duchess and left her great wealth, and during a long life she bore herself so discreetly that when she died, thirty-three years after the Cardinal, Fléchier was able to celebrate her virtues without deviating from the paths of truth.

His niece was the only one of his kinsfolk for whom the Cardinal manifested any great affection, but he was active in advancing the fortunes of the rest of his family. In return for patronage he insisted on tyrannising over them; if he dictated the choice of servants to a prince of the blood royal who had married his niece, we may be certain that he would exact obedience from those of his own blood, whose only hope of advancement was from his favour. For the most part they were submissive to his will, and from the vigour with which he berated the unruly, we can understand the terror with which he was regarded by all who had dealings with him, from the King down.

His correspondence with his nephew, Pont Courlay, is interesting, not only from the light it throws on

the Cardinal's character, but on the modes of life and the extravagances of many French nobles. Pont Courlay had received from his uncle the position of general of the galleys, a well-paid office, but his expenses exceeded his revenues, and no Harpagon could scold a spendthrift son with more vigour than the Cardinal lectured his unlucky nephew He was not indeed restricted to any beggarly state; his allowance of servants would in these days suffice for a prime minister or a millionaire. What is more surprising than the size of the establishment is that Richelieu, with the fate of France depending on him, and with all his public employments, should have had the time and the inclination to regulate the expenses of a young nobleman with more care than would usually be given by a prudent father or an anxious mother. At the very time that the Spanish were advancing on Corbie, when Paris was in danger and Richelieu's political existence was in peril of a disastrous ending, he regulated in detail the modes of life that his nephew must adopt. He could have three gentlemen in attendance, including his equerry, two secretaries, three *valets de chambre*, including his tailor and laundryman, two pages, five lackeys, a steward, a cook, a kitchen boy with an assistant, a coachman, a postillion, two grooms, a muleteer, and a Swiss. Surely this was a suite large enough to please a gentleman fond of display, and it did not include his wife's servants, of whom the Cardinal also made a list. To her he allowed fourteen servants, including her own coachman, cook, butler, and lackey. Only four of her attendants

were women, which shows how large a part of domestic service was then performed by men. But the nephew was not contented, he kept a great establishment, he ran in debt, and his uncle poured reproaches upon him. Already he had paid the spendthrift's debts, and he wrote him that this would be of no avail unless his extravagances were checked. "You have five gentlemen in waiting and six secretaries; if you need so many you must have more business than I, for I have never had more than three. You have six *valets de chambre*, and I have never had more than three." "You will reduce your establishment according to the list I have sent," the Cardinal continues, and he orders the nephew to put aside each month three thousand livres, which would be enough for his table and his stable. Presently he put the nephew's affairs in the hands of two guardians, and he writes again: "If you don't regulate your affairs according to my orders, you can seek aid in the future where you think best, and we shall take fit measures to preserve what we can for your wife and children." The Cardinal forgave extravagant nephews no more than intriguing courtiers; it was a mortal offence to oppose his will. In his testament the nephew was passed by, and his son Armand de Vignerot, the grand nephew of Richelieu, was not only chosen to inherit the title and the largest share of the estate, but he also replaced his father in the position of general of the galleys.

There was no detail in the affairs of strangers, any more than of his own family, in which the Cardinal

declined to interest himself; he found time to attend to the odds and ends of a paternal government. A lawless young officer with a band of retainers seized a young lady in her own house and carried her off. The mother did not go to the police, she sent her tale of woe directly to the prime minister, and he himself despatched a letter to the offender, bidding him at once to restore the maiden or incur his severest displeasure. Such an order was promptly obeyed, for no one dared to trifle with the Cardinal. The young lady was returned to her mother's charge, none the worse for her adventure, and the officer continued in the service, apparently with his reputation unaffected by his escapade.

The Cardinal's elder brother left no offspring, the second brother was a priest, and Richelieu was forced to seek for heirs among his sister's children. The Marquis of Brézé, a gentleman of good family and fair ability, married one of Richelieu's sisters when he was an unimportant bishop of the little diocese of Luçon, but the alliance proved more advantageous than the most flattering soothsayer would have dared to predict. When Richelieu attained to power, he took the fortunes of his brother-in-law in charge; Brézé was made captain of the guard, a marshal of France, the governor of Anjou, and afterwards of Brittany. His son was selected by the Cardinal as one of his legatees, and on him were bestowed the duchy of Fronsac and numerous other possessions. When a very young man he was made admiral of France and a great career seemed before him, but at the age of twenty-seven he was killed at the siege of Orbitello.

Armand de Vignerot de Pont Courlay was chosen to bear the title and perpetuate the name of Richelieu. His descendants at least kept the name from becoming only an historical recollection. Marshal Richelieu was one of the best known men of the eighteenth century, not only in France but in Europe. He was also one of the most despicable of characters, a professional Lothario, vain, corrupt, greedy, and false. Yet, though he was a poor soldier, an inconstant lover, and an empty braggart, Marshal Richelieu was always popular; there was a certain audacity about the man that attracted the public; wit he had in abundance; he led a long and unworthy career of fourscore years, beloved by women, admired by men, and favoured by his sovereign.

His grandson was of a different type; less brilliant than his ancestor, he did honourable work for France and for humanity.

The fortunes of another branch of Richelieu's family possess a certain interest. Marshal la Mailleraie was Richelieu's cousin on the mother's side, and attained to prominence and wealth by the Cardinal's favour. Many years later, when Mazarin came to select a husband for the niece to whom he proposed to leave the bulk of his enormous wealth, he was embarrassed in the choice. There were many suitors for the greatest heiress in Europe, the favourite niece of the minister who ruled France. Charles II. was refused because he was an exile; the heir of the Courtenays who once sat on the throne of Constantinople was refused because he was too

poor; and of less illustrious aspirants there was no end. Mazarin at last selected the young Mailleraie, and it is not impossible that he was in part influenced by a wish to ally his family with that of the Cardinal who had been his patron and his exemplar.

It was not a fortunate choice. The husband was little better than a lunatic, the wife had the wild blood of the Mancini in her veins; he would have exhausted the patience of the most enduring of spouses, she would have destroyed the peace of the most judicious of husbands. Naturally, their household came to grief. The Duchess of Mazarin fled from France; she had refused to marry Charles II. when he was a fugitive, and she became his mistress when he was a king. The duke divided his energies between daubing over famous paintings left by Mazarin, in order to conceal nudities that were offensive to his rigorous piety, and wasting his estate in hundreds of lawsuits which a perverse ingenuity enabled him to stir up. The union of the families of Richelieu and Mazarin produced only misery and scandal.

CHAPTER XII

THE RESULTS OF RICHELIEU'S ADMINISTRATION

WHAT manner of man Richelieu was appears in the record of his life. His intellect though acute was not original, his character though vigorous was not exalted. Yet he gained a position in the world, an influence in the politics of his own country and of Europe, such as is rarely held by anyone not born to a throne, and not often by an hereditary sovereign. Among the great statesmen France has produced, among the acute and ambitious cardinals and bishops who have held high political office, Richelieu occupies a place by himself; he was sagacious in his policy, tireless in his activity, and remorseless in his animosities.

He possessed various qualities which excite admiration. A man of great courage, he was never turned from his path by the machinations of enemies, never discouraged by difficulties or failures; he bore calamities with firmness, and would not make peace without honour so long as he could borrow money to buy guns or had men left to fire them. Such dauntless resolution is the more admirable

when found in a sickly and diseased body. This weakly valetudinarian was as firm in his purpose as if he possessed the vigour of a centaur, as undisturbed in adversity and danger as if he had nerves of steel.

With these heroic traits were mingled many weaknesses. The Cardinal loved pomp and splendour; he had none of the elevation of mind which disdains the insignia of State and the trappings of wealth. He was a vain man, fond of applause; he found pleasure not only in well-earned tributes to his achievements as a statesman, but in the praises lavished by hungry poets and obsequious retainers on the poor rhymes he wrote and the second-rate plays which he indited.

The subtlety of his character was perhaps necessary in the atmosphere of deceit and plots in which he lived, but, while cunning may be a serviceable quality, it is not an heroic quality. Imperious when he held power, he was obsequious when he sought it; no one flattered the great more adroitly when he was himself a person of small account. If his treatment of Louis XIII. was required in order to preserve his influence over that vacillating monarch, it showed the skill of an adroit courtier rather than the simple frankness of a strong nature.

One can trace points of resemblance between the great Cardinal and the great Commoner. Like the first Pitt, Richelieu was always dramatic; he posed for the public and for all who had dealings with him. His position as a prince of the Church forbade, perhaps, simple and unceremonious relations with

ordinary mortals, but neither were they to his taste. He wished to live in magnificent palaces, to be surrounded by numerous retainers, to be addressed with fitting deference. Sitting in his palace in princely state, clothed in the red robes of his office, he was an imposing spectacle, and such he loved to be. The taste for display is often the mark of a weak mind, yet both Chatham and Richelieu were fond of it, and no one would question their greatness.

If the Cardinal attached to outward trappings somewhat more weight than they deserved, this was not a matter of great importance. His implacability, what his enemies called his bloody-mindedness, has been regarded as a more serious defect in his character. He was indeed a cold man, unwavering in his animosities and merciless in punishment; his charities were few and far between, he was not tender-hearted, and it is doubtful if he was greatly disturbed either by individual suffering or by general conditions of distress. In this he resembled most other men. There are few, indeed, like St. Francis de Sales, who devote their lives to increasing the happiness of others and to lessening the burden of human woe.

By his profession, Richelieu was largely cut off from family ties. He lived in an arena of political intrigue. He was absorbed in his ambition; he believed that his enemies were the enemies of the State, and so they were; he was disturbed by no compunction when he visited upon them the severest penalties for their misdeeds. The people thought

that the minister gave little heed to their sufferings, and they were probably right in this opinion. The Cardinal sat in his great palace, so they declared, surrounded by splendour for which they had paid, planning campaigns and plotting the ruin of his enemies, with little thought of those upon whom fell the burden of war and taxation, and who gained from it neither benefit nor glory.

Richelieu was hated by his contemporaries of high and low estate, but a man's character may be unamiable and his policy costly, and still the results of his career may advance the interests of the country whose servant he is. Such would have been his reply if anyone had had the temerity to say to his face that in their hatred of him peer and peasant were on terms of perfect equality.

The character of the minister was complex beyond the ordinary measure of human nature. His enemies denounced the false priest who betrayed the interests of the Church, who was lax in the observances of its practices, and disregarded the morality it taught; they reviled the cruel minister who packed courts in order to condemn his enemies, and sent to the block gallant officers and high-minded noblemen; who drove his benefactress into exile and made the King his puppet; who accumulated enormous wealth, while the peasant starved in his hovel; who, in all questions of Church and State, considered only the preservation of his power and the satisfaction of his ambition.

On the other hand, his admirers pointed to the great achievements of his career: disorder was

repressed, the law was enforced, fraud and pillage were checked; France had never known so vigorous an administration at home, she had never exercised such influence abroad; her armies were victorious, her territories were increased, she controlled the destinies of Europe. The statesman by whom such things were accomplished was surely a great man.

That he was a kindly man, or a merciful man, or a lovable man was said by neither friend nor foe. The axe fell so often on persons of high degree that when Marshal Saint Geran was on his death-bed in 1632, he said to those around him: "They will not recognise me in the other world, for it is a long time since a marshal of France has gone there with a head on his shoulders."

With everyone who plays a great part in the world, the question arises as to the permanence of his work: have the results affected posterity and modified national and social development? In the administrative system of France we can still find traces of Richelieu's influence. It was his policy to concentrate the power of the Government; he did not believe in the division of authority or in local self-rule. In this there was indeed nothing new, but under Richelieu centralisation became the recognised and established theory of French government. Louis XIV. perfected what the Cardinal had designed, and the tendency thus given French administration has been permanent. The present French system rests on the basis established by the genius of Napoleon, but he followed in the beaten paths of the old *régime*.

Not only was Richelieu's work permanent in its character, but it was wholesome at the time. The value of local institutions is indeed great, but on French soil they had no vigorous growth. The local states, the city governments, the organisations, half political, half commercial, which Richelieu overthrew rested on privilege, and possessed little possibility of useful development.

Still less did he overthrow any useful check on arbitrary power when he repressed the independent authority of the great nobles; what he destroyed was not liberty, but license. In the regency of Mary de' Medici we can see the nobility, the Protestants, the local political bodies, unchecked by the general government. The results were not beneficial to the public weal. The country was distracted by civil war, the land was full of marauders, trade was disturbed, the merchant could not be sure of selling his goods, the peasant could not be sure of gathering his crops; France enjoyed neither prosperity at home nor consideration abroad.

In the years preceding his ministry, an unruly nobility, unfit to exercise control and unwilling to suffer restraint, plundered the State when in power and ravaged the country when in disgrace. From a bankrupt treasury, a paralysed monarchy, and a turbulent nobility we turn to Richelieu's administration and find a government influential and strong, we exchange anarchy and misrule for peace and order. His hand was laid heavily on those who opposed him, but he procured for the country the blessings of an orderly and well-regulated

government; every man was secure in his own, the law protected the citizen, the fields brought forth their increase, and the husbandman gathered into his barns, undisturbed by foreign foes or internal marauders.

To Richelieu is given the praise or blame of casting in a definite mould the character of the French government, the forms of administration, and the tendencies of national growth. The judgment passed upon his work varies with the political beliefs of the judge and his reading of French history. The Cardinal imparted vigour to the administration, he resisted the lawlessness of the great nobles, he checked the insubordination of the Huguenots, the authority of the King became unquestioned and uncontrolled. As a result, France assumed a leading position among the great powers, the way was prepared for the supremacy of Louis XIV. in European politics, and for important accessions to French territory.

But the question remains, whether different tendencies could have been given to national growth, whether a government could have been formed possessing vigour, yet restrained by law; whether liberty could have been obtained without the need of revolution, and the country have gained its glory at a less price.

Richelieu found French politics in a condition where a strong man could greatly modify their development. Under Louis XIV., even throwing out of consideration the personal character of the monarch, it was too late; the die had been cast, the

form of government was fixed, and to alter it would have been beyond the power of any one man. It was not so at the close of Henry IV.'s reign. Though the States-General of 1614 accomplished little, we are surprised to find how often they demanded reforms of which time was to show the wisdom and the necessity. Their representatives asked that judicial offices should no longer be sold; they demanded a reduction of taxation and of pensions, and the abolition of duties between different provinces. They sought to restrain governmental interference in trade, they asked for liberty of commerce and manufacture, for a uniform system of weights and measures, and most important of all, they demanded that at least once in ten years the States-General should be convened.

They were not convened by Richelieu, and it was not strange. He had himself been a member of the States-General of 1614, and had been a witness of the impotence of that body. He felt the contempt of a man of clear purpose and strong will for their uncertain and varying moods; he believed that great results could be produced, not by the combined wisdom or lack of wisdom of a representative body, but by the sagacity and determination of one man. That political safety might lie in a gradual preparation of the people to express their own will and control their own destiny, was an idea outside of Richelieu's range of conception. His intellect was powerful, but narrow. He did good work for the State, but to conceive political changes that might secure for France the glory of the seventeenth

century without involving her in the ignominy of the eighteenth century was beyond his ken.

For the opinion of the multitude he felt a contempt which he did not conceal. "Nothing is more dangerous," he wrote, "than to pay attention to popular clamour. . . . The force of reason should be our only guide." By reason Richelieu meant his own judgment, and in a similar way this word was interpreted by his successors. If infallibility were always found in rulers, this might be well. But when the head of a centralised government was an indolent voluptuary like Louis XV., and enormous power was intrusted to corrupt and inefficient ministers, the results were disastrous.

In Richelieu's day, there was no ambiguity in the assertion of the absolute and uncontrolled authority of the monarch. "A monarchical state," said an edict of 1641, "can allow no division of authority. . . . The power lodged in the person of the King is the source of the monarchy's greatness, the foundation on which its preservation rests." "Kings," said Richelieu, "are the living images of God. . . . The royal majesty is second to the Divine Majesty." "The first thing I considered," he said further, speaking of his policy as a minister, "was the majesty of the King, the second was the greatness of the kingdom." "I owe no account of my actions or the administration of my State save to God alone," wrote Louis XIII. Louis XIV. carried these maxims only a little further. "Kings are absolute masters," he wrote his son. "It is the

will of God that he who is born a subject should render an unquestioning obedience."

This was the theory which Richelieu maintained, and such became the accepted theory of French government. It was not novel, but in the past it had been stated with less precision and had been applied with less energy. James I. of England laid down principles of monarchical authority that would have been accepted by Louis XIV., but they were the empty vagaries of a pedant. In France not only were they advanced, but they were tranquilly accepted by the people of the country.

The peaceable acceptance by the French people of the tenets of absolute monarchy was largely due to the success of the monarchy in its foreign policy. When French armies were winning great victories and new provinces were added to the kingdom, there was little danger of any serious discontent with the form of government. The foreign policy of Richelieu was in the highest degree sagacious; it was implicitly followed by Mazarin, it was followed by Louis XIV. during his earlier years of success and glory. Only in the disasters that attended the close of Louis XIV.'s reign, and amid the ignominies of Louis XV.'s career, did the French people begin to weary of the Government under which they lived.

Richelieu's ideal was a submissive people ruled by an absolute monarch. Thus he believed the forces of the State could best be exercised, and its influence in Europe become most extensive. In this, perhaps, he was right. For two centuries France

was the leading power of the continent; a highly centralised government followed a policy of aggrandisement that would not have been pursued with the same steadiness and sagacity by a nation in which popular institutions existed.

Not often has one man so absorbed every phase of government. An historian says: "Mary de' Medici, Louis XIII., all the parties of the Court, were effaced before the personality of Richelieu. . . . He put in movement or paralysed all political forces, for his own profit." He dominated the King, he regulated the development of the Church, he decided on peace and war, he modified internal institutions, he sought to control the progress of literature and the administration of the law; for twenty years the social and political life of France seemed bound up in one imperious, untiring man.

The permanence of Richelieu's work shows that it was in accord with national tendencies and the conditions of the times. It is the test of a statesman that his creations endure; the influence of Richelieu upon French government continued for almost two centuries and was by no means destroyed even by the great cataclysm of the Revolution. The mob paraded the head of the great Cardinal on a pole in brutal triumph, but the theory of centralised government, which he did so much to perfect and which alone, as he believed, could render France great, did not perish in the French Revolution.

It is perhaps an idle pastime to say what might have been the results of Richelieu's career if he had been actuated by different purposes. So great was

his power that he could have wrought changes that later would have been difficult, if not impossible. Though local institutions were already much weakened, he might have given them new vigour instead of completing their ruin. Instead of sending out superintendents who should gather into their own hands all matters of local administration, he might have educated town and city officials for an intelligent performance of their duties. But the task would not have been an easy one; local officers would probably have been worse administrators than the direct representatives of the general government, and it would have been a slow and difficult process to educate any large proportion of the population to take an intelligent interest in their own affairs. The mass of the French people were little better fitted for the duties of citizenship than were the negroes of the South at the close of the Civil War. Richelieu's statesmanship must be judged by the conditions of the seventeenth century, and not by those of the nineteenth.

It was indeed possible to ameliorate the condition of the French people. Methods of taxation could have been improved. Trade and commerce could have been relieved from onerous restrictions; the burdens could have been lightened which made the peasant's lot miserable and rendered any considerable improvement in his fortunes almost hopeless.

Yet perhaps the worst evil from which the country suffered was internal disorder; this Richelieu checked and he made it easy for Louis XIV. to secure for his subjects the blessing of undisturbed

tranquillity, to sweep away the last traces of feudal and mediæval lawlessness.

The dangers that resulted from the centralisation of authority in one man were illustrated after Richelieu's death. The controlling hand was taken away. The Cardinal had not created institutions which would continue in harmonious operation although he was not there to guide them; all authority had emanated from him alone, and, when he was gone, an era of confusion followed. The disturbances of the Fronde might have cost France all the conquests which had been acquired by the expenditure of so much blood and money during the Thirty Years' War.

Richelieu's influence upon the administration of justice was injurious. It is not strange that he was impatient of the attempts made by the courts to restrain the political action of the Government. While it is hard to say how the problem of providing France with more liberal institutions could have been worked out, it is certain that judges holding life positions, which they acquired by purchase, could never have formed a serviceable legislative body or exercised a useful check on the royal authority.

Richelieu's offence was not that he browbeat the judges when they sought to combine legislative with judicial functions, but that he constantly interfered with their legitimate action. He organised a special court for the trial of every man of prominence who was charged with treason against the State or the Cardinal. There was no necessity for this. It would have been possible to obtain convictions of

rebels like Montmorenci, or of traitors like Cinq-Mars, from the regularly organised courts. If occasionally some enemy of the Cardinal's had escaped the full punishment which the minister desired to visit upon him, no great harm would have been done. In no department was the arbitrary power of the French King more injudiciously exercised than in dealing with political offenders. It was so easy and pleasant to ensure the punishment of men disagreeable to the Government by appointing judges who would promptly condemn them, that the evil example set by Richelieu was certain to be followed. Down to the time of the Revolution, arbitrary arrests, accompanied by arbitrary imprisonment, and often followed by arbitrary punishment, were fixed institutions in French government; nothing was more offensive to the public, or in the long run more dangerous to the stability of the monarchy.

In his zeal to punish his enemies, the Cardinal resorted to methods of evil precedent. The creation of special courts, and the convictions obtained without evidence worthy of the name, did permanent harm to the development of French jurisprudence. The sanctity of the law, the strict observance of its forms for those of high as well as of low estate, have been of vast importance in the growth of the English constitution. In France justice has been less secure, and the evils of this have been seen in our own day, as well as in the times of Richelieu. "In conspiracy," wrote the Cardinal, "it is almost impossible to have mathematical proofs, and when

the circumstances are pressing, other proofs must take their place."

"Even if one does a little too much," he writes again, "no inconvenience results and security is assured; for fear is the thing which is most likely to dissipate cabals." A commission was appointed to try or rather to condemn Marshal Marillac, but it delayed the conviction and thereupon Richelieu dissolved it and chose a new commission. "It is necessary to be careful in selecting the judges," he wrote. The care was exercised, and a speedy conviction ensued, but such trials bring the administration of justice into disrepute. The Cardinal viewed this procedure with satisfaction. He writes, "I will cut the nails of those against whom we must be on guard so short that their ill-will will be harmless." He kept his word.

In Richelieu's foreign policy there was little to criticise. He involved France in the Thirty Years' War to prevent Austria from becoming supreme in Germany, but he entertained a well-founded hope that French success would be rewarded by important accessions to French territory. The long war was sure to change the boundaries and relations of many states; Sweden demanded territorial aggrandisement as a compensation for her victories; France was justified in making similar demands, and was better able to enforce their satisfaction.

The growth of French power in the seventeenth century was, perhaps, the most important result of Richelieu's administration. The sixteenth century witnessed little change in the boundaries of the

French kingdom; during most of the time the country was involved in internal strife, wars of religion and wars of succession, and was in no condition to make important gains at the expense of other nations. The Spanish empire was then at the height of its power; when Philip II. ruled at Madrid and Henry III. ruled at Paris, an intelligent observer would have thought it more likely that Spain would secure acquisitions from France, than that the possessions of that great state would be wrested from it by what seemed a weaker rival. But there were elements of weakness and dissolution in the Spanish empire, while the French kingdom contained possibilities of development that soon rendered it the greatest power in Europe.

Except for the assistance given to the Netherlands, the reign of Henry IV. was for the most part occupied with the restoration of order and the development of internal prosperity. Under Richelieu, France made her formal entry as the principal actor in the field of continental politics; the policy which he inaugurated was continued by Mazarin and Louis XIV., and produced results of permanent importance.

"I wished to restore to Gaul the limits which nature designed for her . . . to identify Gaul with France," it was thus the Cardinal stated his policy of expansion. He left the task unfinished, little new territory was ceded to France during his lifetime, but the work had been designed and others carried it to completion.

It was to the east and north, and in the direction

of the Rhine, that French ambition chiefly turned. The identification of France with Gaul, the claim of the Rhine as an ancient boundary, was the justification of these aspirations, but, on better grounds than history misread, it might be argued that the Rhine was a dividing line placed by nature between great nations; that this river, with the Alps and the Pyrenees, would form natural boundaries and guard the country against invasion from any quarter.

The decay of the Spanish kingdom had already begun, and, even if Richelieu had never been minister, it is certain that France would soon have exerted an influence in Europe far greater than that of the petrified monarchy of Spain. But in the decline of Spain was the opportunity of France. Richelieu comprehended this, and Louis XIV. followed in his footsteps until led astray by the desire of seeing his grandson on the Spanish throne. Roussillon, Franche-Comté, and most of the Spanish Netherlands became parts of France, and were accessions of great importance.

In Germany, the Cardinal adopted the policy most advantageous for French ambition. It was not philanthropic, it was not based on any theories of the brotherhood of man, but, if France was to be the foremost power in Europe, it was not the part of wisdom to build up a united Germany as a rival. During the seventeenth century, there was no more prospect of a united Germany than of a united Italy, but it was possible that Austria might exercise a control over most of the German states as effective as in our own day has been exercised by

Prussia. Richelieu undertook the defence of the minor German princes against the increasing power of the Emperor, and French statesmen long regarded this as the true rôle for France to pursue. Its success was assured by the Treaty of Westphalia, which secured many blessings for the German people, but did not leave Germany in a condition where it could be a dangerous rival to French power. Through the efforts of Mazarin, the League of the Rhine was formed, under the protection of France, and the French King long exercised in Germany an influence quite equal to that of the Emperor and greater than that of any other German prince.

Richelieu showed less sagacity in his dealings with England. In this he resembled many French statesmen before and since his day. The two nations are so unlike in character, in situation, in government, that it has been difficult for them to understand each other, and the task has been rendered no easier by a mutual and deep-seated dislike. The marriage of Louis's sister to Charles I. was regarded as one of the achievements of Richelieu's early career, but France gained nothing by the alliance. The Cardinal strangely misjudged the English people of that period when he hoped that any advantages would be secured for English Catholics by this marriage. In the irritation caused by the English alliance with La Rochelle, we find him coquetting with Spain and planning an invasion of England which should restore that heretical country to the Catholic fold.

Later, he seems to have given assistance to the Scotch rebels. In this indeed he only followed the recognised usages of the period; he encouraged internal disturbances in England in the same manner that the Spanish encouraged the Huguenots when they rebelled against Louis XIII.

Except a few towns along the Italian frontier, nothing was actually ceded to France during Richelieu's lifetime. He left unfinished the great wars in which France had become involved, but most of the acquisitions which the country finally gained were practically secured before Richelieu's death.

Both Catalonia and Roussillon were held by France in 1642, besides important cities in the Spanish Low Countries. Spain would not confess her defeat until seventeen years after Richelieu's death, but by the Peace of the Pyrenees, Roussillon, the most of Artois, and parts of Hainault and Luxembourg were ceded to the French. If Richelieu had lived, it is probable that Catalonia would also be French soil, but the insurrection of the Fronde and the disloyal conduct of the Prince of Condé cost France that province; Catalonia was returned to Spain, alike to the grief and the injury of its inhabitants, and the Pyrenees continued to divide the two countries.

It was in the north and east that the territories most valuable to France were situated, and for sixty years the French boundaries were steadily extended in those directions. Alsace was closely allied with the Empire and its population was largely German, but Richelieu contemplated the possibility of its

annexation, and his counsels were not lost on Mazarin. By the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, six years after Richelieu's death, this province, with some reservations, was ceded to France. It was an acquisition of vast importance, for it carried the boundary line to the Rhine and strengthened France where she was most exposed to invasion. Between Spain and Italy the Pyrenees and the Alps were sufficient boundaries, and seemed to be the line of demarcation fixed by nature. At the east no such dividing lines were placed. Germany was the neighbour from which France had most to fear, and the wavering and changing boundaries between the two countries have marked the fluctuations of French and German ascendancy. Alsace has since become a part of the German Empire, but for two centuries it added to the strength of the French kingdom.

When Richelieu died, Lorraine was in the possession of France, and the Cardinal regarded the acquisition of that province as practically accomplished. The French held it for more than twenty years, when it was again surrendered to the dukes of Lorraine. It is doubtful if the Cardinal would have approved such a step or have consented to it. It was not, however, of large importance. For most purposes, Lorraine was a portion of France for a century before its formal annexation. After the acquisition of Alsace, French territory bounded Lorraine on three sides; even the most unruly of dukes could with difficulty assume a position of hostility toward a powerful kingdom into which his own territories

were wedged. The endeavour was indeed made, and it resulted in the French holding Lorraine during a considerable part of the reign of Louis XIV., while its dukes wandered about Europe, taking part as princely *condottieri* in wars to which they could contribute little but their names and their ability as soldiers. Though Lorraine did not become formally a part of France until 1766, practically it had long been French.

Thus we may fairly look upon Richelieu's administration as the beginning of the hegemony which France exercised over Western Europe for almost two centuries. Her military power was increased by the Revolution and by the genius of Napoleon, but Richelieu can be regarded as one who took part, and not an unimportant part, in making France the great military power of Western Europe. This was the object he most desired. No French statesman before him had so clearly marked out this policy, and none after him pursued a more sagacious course in order to accomplish that result.

France owed much to the adroitness, the good judgment, and the unwearied perseverance of Mazarin. In the qualities of a diplomat he was not inferior to his predecessor, and he was served by far abler soldiers. But if Richelieu was not in all respects superior to Mazarin, he was a man of more original mind, as well as of more commanding character, and the credit of shaping the policy by which France became the first of European powers, must, in large degree, be awarded to the iron Cardinal.

The administration of Richelieu was not a period

of general prosperity. Business does not flourish nor wealth increase during a season of almost continuous warfare; the wars of this era were long and costly, and a heavy drain on the country's resources. But even in times of peace, it is doubtful if Richelieu would have done much toward enhancing national well-being. He was, indeed, interested in colonial development, in the growth of the marine and the extension of commerce, but the measures he adopted were not well fitted to produce the results he desired. He believed in governmental regulation and governmental interference. Trade flourishes best when let alone, and Richelieu was unwilling to let anything alone. Still, he did good work in drawing attention to the importance of colonial development, and the failure of France as a colonial power cannot be charged to him.

While the condition of France under Richelieu was far better than during the period of disorder and misrule which immediately preceded his administration, it compared less favourably with the conditions that existed under Henry IV. Though the aggregate wealth of the country increased, the general prosperity that attended the wise rule of the Béarnese was not again witnessed in France until the latter half of the eighteenth century.

The excessive cost of government, aggravated by an oppressive system of taxation, kept the people poor. The Government was costly, partly as a result of extravagance and corrupt administration, but in larger degree on account of the prevalence of war. Richelieu was minister eighteen years, and

during sixteen years of that time the country was at war with the Huguenots, or with foreign states. During the eighteen years of Mazarin's administration, peace was almost unknown. The war with Spain began long before he became minister, and ended only a little more than a year before his death, and during five years of his administration the evils of civil war still further aggravated the situation. After Mazarin's death Louis XIV. assumed the burdens of State, and the country was at war for more than one-half of the sixty-four remaining years of his reign. During the century following the death of Henry IV. the country was either engaged in hostilities with foreign powers, or distracted by internal insurrection during more than seventy years.

The population increased somewhat, and undoubtedly the nation's resources were larger at the end of the seventeenth century than at its beginning, but the rapid increase of wealth, to which we have become accustomed in this century, was then unknown. Taxation increased out of proportion to the growth of national wealth. There can be no doubt that under Richelieu's administration, and during the closing years of Louis XIV.'s reign, the tax-gatherer took a larger percentage of the nation's earnings than in the days of Henry IV.

It is desirable that comfort should be generally diffused and that wealth should increase, yet the accumulation of money is not the sole object of national, any more than of individual existence. Richelieu had other ideals; he wished France to be

the first state of Europe, he desired that her boundaries should grow broader, her power grow greater, her influence become larger. He wished to shape the form of government so that these ends might best be attained, and he accomplished the object which he undertook. It is doubtful whether the French people were any happier at the end of Richelieu's administration than at its beginning, but, beyond question, France was a more powerful state.

THE END

MAP OF FRANCE.

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